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ABSTRACT

The 1972-1974 Neighborhood Information Center (NIC) Project was undertaken in Atlanta, Cleveland, Detroit, Houston, and Queens Borough to demonstrate that urban public libraries could be a vital force in daily living by providing free information and referrals to low income communities, and by adapting in non-traditional ways to meet neighborhood needs. This evaluation addressed system administration, project administration, and community, agency, and professional impact. Data was collected on user and request characteristics, user satisfaction, agency opinion, and interviews with 55 NIC staff and library administrators; findings for each project showed that: (1) where adminstrative support was strong, consistent, and articulated to staff, NIC had greater acceptance by and impact on staff, community, and agencies; (2) service was more successful where staff made themselves known in the neighborhood; and (3) high morale prevailed in all projects. All libraries conducted NIC outreach and publicity efforts, and reported a high degree of acceptance and cooperation by social and service agencies; however, little local project evaluation was undertaken. The study concluded that the total project achieved its basic purposes and pioneered a new service showing promise for increased public library effectiveness. Questionnaires and tabulations are appended. (KP)

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Evaluative Study

of

The Neighborhood Information

Center Project

A Report to the Cleveland

Public Library

by

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and

F. William Summers

May 1974

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Chapter I

General Introduction

"In NIC we not only teach but advise and console" - Branch Librarian

A. The NIC Project

The project under review is titled A Proposal To Research and Design Criteria for the Implementation and Establishment of A Neighborhood Information Center in Five Public Libraries in Five Cities: Atlanta, Cleveland, Detroit, Houston, Queens Borough. The project began operation on July 1, 1972 with three phases to be completed by June 30, 1973. Phase III of the project was extended with additional funding from July 1, 1973 to April 30, 1974 and subsequently a no-cost extension has extended Phase III of the project until June 30, 1974.

Phase I of the project was a feasibility study to be conducted in each of the five cities on a concurrent basis. Phase I was to extend from July 1 through October 1973. Overlapping with this phase was Phase II which was an overall planning study conducted by the Cleveland Public Library to develop the criteria and guidelines necessary for the implementation which was to be Phase III. Phase II began in September and extended through December 1973. Phase III was the implementation phase of the project and was to begin January 1, 1973. The project was designed as a consortium between the five libraries with the Cleveland Public Library providing overall direction and planning and each library conducting a local project in conformity to general guidelines developed in Phase II.

The work undertaken in Phases I and II and the initial efforts in Phase III have been documented in the Annual Report of the Project submitted in September 1973.[1]

Objective

The basic objective of the NIC project was "to demonstrate to neighborhood residents and the community at-large that the Urban Public Library can be a vital force in daily living, will provide free information, will refer residents to additional sources for information and assistance, and that the library can adapt itself in non-traditional ways to meet the needs of those who have not previously used Public Library services, and have neither experience, nor knowledge of the role a Public Library can play in the daily life of the residents of the community".

Purpose

The purpose of the project was, "to provide information or referral information assistance to people who may be in lower income brackets, poverty level, welfare assisted, who may have little or limited education, who may have difficulty in reading or in understanding information in printed forms and need interpretation to aid and enrich the lives of these people and the lives of their children, to demonstrate that a Public Library will play a meaningful role in dissemination of information by establishing an Information Center plaaned specifically for a neighborhood, and by meeting the varied information needs of the people served in the neighborhood selected". [2]

These objectives and purposes adequately describe the project, have guided its activities and form the base against which evaluation of the project has been undertaken.

B. Evaluation of the NIC Project

From its inception it was intended that as a research and demonstration project the NIC project would have careful evaluation. As part of the initial

project design it was anticipated that each local project would arrange for a local evaluation at the close of Phase III. In actuality local evaluation was undertaken only in Cleveland. In May 1973 Dr. Hardy Franklin completed a local evaluation of the Cleveland project. Local evaluation has clearly not been seen as a priority item by local project directors.

In February 1973 the Cleveland Public Library as National Project Director employed Dr. William H. Foley and through him David Taylor and David D. Thomson, staff members of the Evaluation Center at Ohio State University to undertake an evaluation of the project through July 1973 which would have coincided with the originally scheduled end of Phase III. During the course of this evaluation the project was extended to April 30, 1974. Dr. Foley et. al. completed their evaluation efforts in July 1973 and the result was published as Chapter III of the Annual Report of the project.[3]

This evaluation while primarily descriptive in nature provides a clear picture of the activities undertaken in Phases I and II and in the early stages of Phase III.

In late October 1973 the authors met with representatives of each of the libraries involved in the project to discuss further evaluation procedures for the project. In January 1974 an agreement between the authors and the Cleveland Public Library providing for evaluation of the project was concluded. Under the terms of this agreement the evaluation was to consist of the following elements:

1. Review and study of project reports and documents to provide background and framework for the evaluation study;

2. Preparation of interview schedules and data collection instruments;

3. A two day visit to each of the five project sites;

4. Analysis of interview and data collection results.

5. Preparation and presentation of a report.

6. It was additionally agreed that during the month of January 1974 the five project libraries would collect data on user characteristics, on information sought by users and on referrals to other agencies by utilizing data collection forms prepared by the consultants.

It was also agreed that to avoid duplication and repetition of earlier evaluation efforts that the current evaluation would be addressed to five significant aspects of the project's operations. These aspects were:

1. System Administration.

2. Project Administration

3. Community Impact

4. Agency Impact

5. Professional Impact

In carrying out this assignment the consultants have engaged in a number of steps which will be outlined below:

1. Data Collection

Three instruments were devised for the collection of data. These instruments were:

a. A Library Data Collection Form. This form which is shown in Appendix I was utilized in each of the five libraries during the month of January to collect specific data about users. Data sought included the requests made by the users, characteristics of the users and the type and frequency of staff outreach activities. A separate part dealt with analysis of requests by subject. The form was submitted to each library and reviewed by them. As will be seen in later discussions the libraries were not able to consistently and completely supply the data requested.

b. A User Response Form. A major innovative aspect of the NIC project is the follow-up procedures on user referrals. This was seen as an important point for evaluation and originally it was hoped that the consultants could undertake the follow-up procedure on a sample basis. The project librarians, however, felt strongly that a major part of the service was the anonymity afforded the user and that to insert a new third party into the follow-up procedure would be dysfunctional for the relationship between the library and the user. Accordingly, it was agreed that the libraries would incorporate the user satisfaction instrument into their follow-up procedure during the month of January and would supply the data to the consultants. All of the libraries were able to do this except the Atlanta Public Library from whom no response was received. A compilation of these responses will be found in Table 1 on page 56, and the questionnaire is shown in Appendix II.

c. An Agency Response Form. A major part of the project deals with the referral of users to other agencies and follow-up on the agency activities to ensure that the user has his questions satisfied. In order to obtain the viewpoint of the agency a questionnaire was submitted to ten agencies in each city except Houston. The questionnaires were sent to the agencies with whom the libraries had the most contact during the project and were sent to a specific contact person in the agency identified by the library. A specific name was used to prevent a perfunctory response from someone in the agency hierarchy who had little or no contact with referrals from the libraries. The agency

questionnaire with aggregate responses is shown in Appendix III and the aggregate responses in Appendix VI.

2. On-Site Interviews

Two full days were spent by both consultants in each location with the exception of Atlanta and Queens in which one of the consultants spent only one day. During each visit a series of interviews were scheduled according to a pre-arranged plan. Prior to each on-site visit the consultants reviewed the reports and descriptive materials made available relative to that project. Upon arrival a brief meeting was scheduled with the local project coordinator to be brought up to date on any personnel or policy changes affecting the branch operations. Next the consultants interviewed the NIC project staff in each of the branches and administered the interview schedule a copy of which is included in Appendix IV. The intent of the schedule was to provide a focused rather than a structured interview and where it seemed advisable or where local situations made it necessary the schedule was departed from and irrelevant or inappropriate questions were omitted.

The interviews were conducted with only the branch staff involved in the NIC project present to insure anonymity of comments by individual staffs and to eliminate any possibility of bias resulting from the presence of "central" staff. The interviews with each branch staff ranged from one hour to about two hours with the average being approximately one hour and a half. Both consultants participated in the interviews with one being primarily responsible for conducting the interview and the other taking notes.

Following the interviews with the branch staffs an interview was scheduled with the local project director and the central NIC staff to

discuss the project in general and to clarify any questions raised in the branch interviews. These interviews were not structured in any way but in general covered the same ground as the branch staff interviews. Following these interviews an interview was held with the library administration to discuss the general perceptions gained, to explore the future of the project and to gain an understanding of any organizational problems which had been identified. These interviews also were unstructured but were generally related to the points raised in the branch staff interviews.

A list of all persons interviewed during the course of the study will be found in Appendix VII. A total of 55 persons were interviewed during the course of the study.

Chapter II

The Local NIC Projects

"Low income people have many problems
not related to information" - NIC aide

This chapter will provide an overview and description of the local projects as conducted in each of the five cities. Unless indicated otherwise data in this section came from the interviews with local staffs or from reports and documents made available to the consultants. A group of recommendations for these local projects will be found in the final portion of the following chapter.

1. Atlanta Public Library

A. System Administration

During Phase III of the NIC Project in the Atlanta Public Library, the director has been on a leave of absence. The administration of the library has been delegated to the Assistant Director and the Administrative Coordinator with no clear, concise, delineation of authority and responsibility. It is true that the above titles alone would be almost self explanatory, but in reality there were flexible lines of demarcation. For example, the Administrative Coordinator is delegated the role of developing and administrating the NIC program, but this was in addition to many other basic, but unspecified day-to-day responsibilities either by clear cut written directives, procedures or the organizational chart dated November 1973. There appeared to be in motion a reorganization of the administrative section and the Central Library. This, of course, added to the present heavy work load of the administrators. These facts are mentioned only because they have some bearing on the systems administration of the Neighborhood Information Centers Project.

A director of the NIC project was selected and was assigned the job of planning, implementing the project, and the day-to-day operation under the supervision of the Administrative Coordinator.

There was documented evidence of pre-planning but the implementation which started strongly had become loose and spotty at the time of evaluation. The oral and written reports brochures, flyers, posters and other items describe a beehive of interesting, relevant, different and unique services existing in the NIC program of the Atlanta Public Library. Some examples were:

1. The certification of a branch member, staff member in each agency to register voters year round.
2. A NIC worker eligible to perform the services of a Notary Public.
3. Assisting young adults (mostly students) to fill out short forms of Income Tax in some centers.
4. In cooperation with Model Cities Program set up storefront libraries with NIC programs in them.

Despite the useful and innovative applications of the concept, the system-wide organizational framework at this time was not solid. The needed day-to-day direction, coordination and supervision is presently not occuring. Previous written reports and data collected during the evaluators visit revealed facts concerning the leadership initially of the program. The quality varied depending on the source of data. There were personality conflicts particularly with top administrators and problems of communication in both directions in the hierarchy. The conflicts seemed to be reflected throughout the program from the training of staff, development of Information and Referral files to type and quality of publicity. Many wounds, seemingly, were left to fester as a result of clashes of personality or differences in philosophical approaches. The NIC directorhsip, Librarian IV slot, is a permanent position and has been vacant since the departure of the last holder of the position in December 1973. This poses special problems, according to administration, because it is a top level position requiring potential, experience, ability, special skills and knowledge. There is a scarcity of talent and interest among older staff, while newcomers have gotten the lions share of promotions in the recent reorganization within the system. So problems of morale of staff are a major consideration in the selection and appointment of a new NIC director, especially if it involves a relatively new staff member.

The Acting Director and Administrative Coordinator, faced with the ending of NIC funds from the National Project were both determined to continue the project in some form throughout the system. There appeared to be efforts to centralize certain types of services in the Central Library.

1. Central Neighborhood Information Center was established in the office formerly occupied by the NIC director. It is staffed by a secretary and a librarian whose title is Assistant Director of NIC. The Assistant Director was recently hired, assigned to the Central NIC and asked to re-organize the office records and correct the Information and Referral files. Other duties were the ordering of materials for NIC and the giving of information and referral services to mostly one time users - walk-ins, who happen to pass and notice the sign. Even though the branch NIC personnel communicate problems and concerns to the office it has not been delegated a coordinating or supervisory role. Authority for day-to-day operations, training and supervision, etc. is still retained by the Administrative Coordinator.

The twenty newspapers subscribed to by NIC, profiles of Atlanta neighborhoods and profiles of agencies were integrated into the Ivan Allen Business and Reference Department. Twelve students from the Urban Institute of the Atlanta University Library School developed the profiles as a phase of their internship training in the Atlanta system. Several NIC librarians were graduates of Atlanta University Library Program.

2. The Telephone Ready Reference, a subsidiary of Ivan Allen Business and Reference Department has been in operation less than three months. It handles the bulk of telephone calls into the central building. It is difficult to determine the exact number of calls that could be classified

as NIC inquiries but staff members estimate that seventy percent could be labeled such. Since the service was experiencing the usual shakedown and growing pains, it was difficult to discern if there were similarities between it and the TIP Center of the Detroit Public Library.

3. The Government Information Center was formerly Government Documents. Its objective is "to research government publications and make available any information services that would benefit the masses". The center restricts its services to handling questions from Telephone Reference but will assist walk-ins. The general public will be served as soon as it is better organized. The NIC funded library position is held by a very knoweldgeable and impressive young lady out of Library School for a year. She knew what her area was about and how it relates to NIC with concrete examples from past experiences or by assisting unexpected walk-ins during the interview. Her background includes a years experience in the NIC program of the Kirkwood Branch.

Atlanta seemed right for the establishment of expanded use of a rich source of information due to accelerated interests and participation by larger numbers of its citizenry in affairs of the city. Many of its elected officials send staff and constituents to review minutes of hearings or monthly meetings. Agencies inquire about recent legislative changes or governmental decisions that affect program or services. A young man entered the room and wanted to know the latest change in Army enlistment regulations before he volunteered. "The average patron wants to know the law whether it pertains to civil rights of the individual city ordinances or the new Mass Transit Authority - MARTA". Likewise, information requests ranged from public use of the National Park System to statistical information of cities or states by people planning to move.

There is a wealth of other useful information in government publications and when imaginatively packaged and promoted as an aspect of its regular service for the total consumption but its public, is a real plus for the Atlanta public. Other libraries could emulate this pattern and approach.

While the changes were not new to the field of librarianship, they were for the Atlanta Public Library. They were clearly imaginative approaches for the NIC concept, however with the exception of the Government Information Service there was evidence of inadequate planning, unclear objectives and goals or methods for achieving the same. Staff seemed to be left to fashion their departments and learn on their own. The press of duties has allowed the Administrative Coordinator a minimum of time to work with persons assigned to the new areas.

B. Project Administration

The local heads of the two NIC Centers were the branch librarians. In both instances, South and Kirkwood Branch librarians had been in program since its inception and were knowledgeable about the strengths and weaknesses of the library branches as neighborhood information centers. There were common problems that each had, and they mostly revolved around (1) inadequate system-wide publicity and promotion, (2) lack of full time NIC staff to do essential neighborhood outreach and (3) lack of communication according to data collected, has always been a problem in both directions.

While the branch leadership appeared to be in capable hands the program suffered because of needed continuous direction for the total program. More planning and guidelines would assist in motivating staff and keeping all centers on the same course.

Programs and materials in both branches were increased by NIC project but each agency was hampered by the lack of staff to do outreach in the community. In previous reports administration indicated that due to lack of staff, it had created a greater demand for service than the library could deliver.

Communication:

All indicated that there were structured channels for communication within the project and between administration. Monthly statistical and narrative reports, written memos and telephone conversations were the most frequent avenues. All mentioned that the telephone was the most desirable because the Administrative Coordinator was easy to reach and answers were given on the spot. The direct approach was a big improvement over the time lost waiting for replies to written correspondence.

Many thought that problems of communications were the most critical throughout at this point, particularly between NIC centers. They duplicated ideas and techniques and did not know this until read in the circulatory monthly reports.

Training:

At the beginning of the program, the branch staff was involved in workshops under the Administrative Coordinator and the Director of NIC. The series included visits and orientations on the resources of the Central Building, visits to agencies and organizations, outside speakers on various topics, neighborhood walks. Recent staff received training after being on the job. Some relied on techniques taught in Library School, or on their own initiative went directly to the community and learned by trial and error.

The in-service training is now conducted by the Administrative Coordinator in the Central Building.

C. Community Impact

Involvement with the community was the theme of the branch center. The personal contact by a library representative full time was mentioned most often as being the element affecting the program of each center. Displays, exhibits, flyers, walking tours, letters, telephone calls, visits to agencies and organizations, constant contact with community people were some means employed in reaching the neighborhoods. "Neighborhoods are more aware now."

Services of NIC now based on experience. "Found most patrons want intermediaries between them and agency or individual, and we try to give such support." Patrons called and complained when information given from the Information and Referral files were inaccurate, or not up to date. The files were recalled and are now being revised. "Local Information and Referral are still being used but each represents a particular area, and are not duplicated in the Atlanta System.

The response, on the whole was considered good. "It was always positive because most were not aware of services." Registration for library cards, circulation of materials and attendance at branch programs increased. Many people gave word of mouth promotion and in general supported the program.

Advisory groups were organized and were very active in both areas. South called groups very helpful. Meet monthly and are all outspoken on issues, i.e. retaining present building as meeting center when new quarters are completed. South NIC's community is in a transitional period and the Advisory Board will make librarians be down to earth about community needs and problems.". The

Kirkwood group was described as being very, very active. "Pushing ahead of the library administration in some respect." The Administrative Coordinator thought that "library staff was not doing the selling job". There was a tendency for branch staff to rely too heavily on Advisory Boards to tell neighbors.

D. Agency Impact

The majority of the agencies contacted were described as being very receptive and very responsive to the information and referral project. Kirkwood workers found that some individuals in federally funded agencies questioned the library's role. Services however eliminated barriers between the library, patrons, and agencies. Follow through gave assurance of NIC staff concern. Patrons also were assured that the same confidentiality that was accorded them by agencies would be maintained by library staff. Personal visits by NIC workers drew immediate responses from agencies.

E. Professional Impact

The September third Progress Report stated that "more public interest in NIC has been evidenced than initially envisioned". Mrs. Yates added that a greater demand may be created for services than the library can deliver. Both comments relate to staffing problems. During the course of our visit the staff interview thought the concept was "meaningful", "brilliant for a community of working people", "the wave of the future".

The program will survive because branch staffs are concerned about services to communities and will rely on local staff and not administration stated one librarian.

"The future is promising if specific directions to program is determined or given by the administration in terms of coordinating staff and program." Communities should feel that they can rely on local staff and administration to provide information requested in an honest, candid manner even if the answer is negative." The above were typical responses from staff.

"Most librarians have never dealt with people who needed help." NIC provided opportunities for gaining experience in working closely with people in direct fashion or real gut issue type problems. Needed much more than say the library staff itself in a working community.

One worker thought that the administrative load on present staff has caused support to be less than genuine because not much personal involvement in meeting community anymore.

If made systemwide, the impression received was that the staff would go along. This was the first project visited in which the majority of librarians encountered thought positively about NIC concept.

2. Cleveland Public Library

The NIC Project of the Cleveland Public Library was the subject of an evaluation during Phase III. This report will pick up from that point since Cleveland was the only program in the National Project to follow the Phase I guidelines on evaluation and the writer of the study is a member of the team evaluating the National NIC Project.

A. System Administration

Since the local evaluation, Mr. Walter Curley, Library Director of Cleveland Public and National Project Director of NIC resigned. The Board of Trustees appointed Dr. Fern Long, Acting Director of C.P.L. and Miss Clara Luciola, Acting Deputy Director. Both are veteran members of the library staff with long friendships and acquaintances within as well as outside the system. The two have a wealth of experience in serving the community on all levels.

Miss Dorothy Turick, presently National Coordinator of the Neighborhood Information Centers Project, was appointed National Director of the program.

The Director of Urban Services, Mr. Jim Rogers, is also the Director of the NIC Project for the system. Mr. Rogers has been more closely involved in the operation of the program. The Operations Officer slot has been filled as recommended by the local evaluation. Miss Beth Rader, formerly Tremont NIC Director, was selected for the position. This has provided more local leadership, active direction and closer supervision for the project. The overall administration of the program has improved. Communication problems and those related to working relationships have also improved drastically. An improved reporting and data collecting performance is evident throughout the program.

B. Project Administration

One problem that caused quite a commotion within the system was the NIC Project in the Tremont area. It was resolved by action of the Board of Trustees. The NIC service, as a result, was divided between Tremont and South Branch. Offices were set up in each branch with staff spending two days at one and two at the other. Since the major portion of requests were made by telephone, service to each was provided by having the same telephone number and line hookup. This allowed staff regardless of office location to provide I&R service. There were few complaints reported by those who visited the centers. The opposition in the community has been reported to have died away since the individual who was the leader is no longer working in the neighborhood.

Organizational changes were made in both centers due to the resignation of one NIC Director to attend the library school and the promotion of another to supervise the project for the system. Other promotions were made from within the project as one of the two remaining Information Aides in each center was appointed Neighborhood Center Director. Operationally this assignment combined supervisory responsibilities with the regular duties of an Information Aide. This appeared not to be delimiting in terms of service to patrons or outreach activities in each community.

Despite the pressure and frustrations brought on by the tentative April 30th ending of funds, staff turnover has been very low. The same NIC workers were still at Langston Hughes.

Tremont had not had any turnover until recently. Two Aides resigned to work with mainline type community organizations. This was caused by job insecurity as the April 30th deadline neared and personal responsibilities.

A housewife and former office worker is the newest employee and now directs the NIC program at Tremont. She was trained by Miss Rader and the present aides in Tremont.

The data continues to reveal very active involvement by the Information Aides of both centers. There appeared to be more active and sustained interaction by NIC employees between and among community groups in both centers.

The communication problem has improved also. Aside from various written reports, separate meetings are held once a month between NIC Centers and with Miss Rader. The meetings were considered very useful by staff because they allowed for a sharing of information about programs, problems and services of possible value.

The data also indicates very good working relationships between NIC personnel. All tend to work closely together. All are expected to finish each case started. There was ample evidence that the NIC workers also assist each other. Example: Man and wife with seven children had so many problems that one person could not handle them alone. Staff simply divided the problems among themselves. The results were a satisfied patron and an exhausted staff.

Both centers developed local directories tailored to each specific community, its problems, needs and resources. Use was also made of the I&R File developed during Phase I.

An integrated, harmonious atmosphere continues to prevail in the operation of the Langston Hughes Branch. With the change from a social worker as Branch Librarian back to a librarian as head, relationships appear to be enhanced.

The Tremont NIC is still an appendage to the regular branch operation-experimental, separate and apart. The experiences of NIC staff at South were reported to be more like Tremont than Langston. Such attitudinal behavior revolves around lack of knowledge about the concept and the program as it really exists and operates.

As one Aide put it, "General reference give a lot of information about broad concepts and issues...Why is it so hard to go a little further and humanize it or personalize the service?...That's what NIC is all about."

The staff of one center complained that decisions were made from "downtown" without sufficient dialogue and input from the center directly involved. The Director of NIC, Mr. Rogers, indicated that aside from the structered channels of communication he had an open door policy and any staff may talk with him at any time. He also thought that closer supervision of project and more personal involvement in total program supported decisions made and action taken.

The majority of the staff considered the training program to be very extensive, thorough and useful. Some comments were: "NIC training makes you more aware of looking for things"..."Cannot divorce oneself from NIC responsibilities when not working. For instance, if I see a new bus schedule I immediately relate to jobs for hire and the quickest and most economical way to get to them". "Even read the newspapers more thoroughly especially the want ads".

C. Community Impact

The feedback from users, as in the earlier evaluation, continues to be very appreciative. The followup was described as a nice, thoughtful

service. Followup is crucial to the information and referral concept because it first documents and rates the effectiveness of the system and procedure set up to supply information and, hopefully, resolve problems. The Phase I survey indicated that people thought that NIC might be good. As one Aide recalled, "I knew NIC was needed because I was out there and had a bunch of problems myself".

Getting to the community was easy, according to the Aides, because of familiarity with the neighborhood, its residents and problems. Publicity, printed posters and flyers brought in many patrons. Neighborhood newspapers also provided space for promotion of NIC services.

Advisory Committees function in both neighborhoods and are reported to be very supportive. The Langston Advisory Group was recently organized while the Tremont Group helped set up NIC Project and felt a part of it. The Tremont Advisory Group questioned their role after the Board of Trustees decision to move NIC to the South Branch part time. Some of the enthusiasm of the group faded away during the conflict with opponents (community) of the center. The Advisory Group, however, has become reactivated and has enlarged its number to include representatives from the South Branch community.

Hearing words that the funds for NIC were to end April 30th, use of the centers was reported to be on the wane.

D. Agency Impact

Data indiactes that the NIC staffs established rapport and meaningful relationships with agencies, whether public or private. The majority made personal contact to acquaint them with new service by the library. The relationships established are now on a first name basis with contacts in

the agencies. Workers in several agencies appreciated the help being given and even reported that they had made personal use of the service. Some agencies send job lists to the library. Even local welfare offices ask about neighborhood sources for emergency food or food stamps. The Central Welfare Department of Cleveland asked NIC personnel to come and talk to welfare workers about services of agencies, etc. This serves not only as recognition of the skill and expertise developed by NIC staff but also the value of the objective information and referral services of the Cleveland Public Library.

E. Professional Impact

CPL's objective is to make NIC an integral part of the library system. The expanded program will not be under two departments. There is agreement with the Trustees position that branches are natural conduits for NIC expansion. Miss Lucioli admitted that there were problems relating to staffs feelings about the project. "The level of trust in neighborhood branches is low.. May also be true of the Central Library as well... Branches need respect and good management to build new concepts, programs and services and NIC could be the catalyst". There were expressed feelings that there were great claims of accomplishment followed by reams of publicity before performances were documented or solidified. A first major task to be undertaken by the present administration "is to revitalize the image and morale of branches".

According to the Acting Director, "NIC in Cleveland has been isolated"... It was seen as being experimental". If NIC expands she continued, "people will not be isolated because they will be more of a part of it".

The Administration plans to implement NIC systemwide through Branches under the Branch Department. The Board is highly in favor of this approach. Lots of interest is reported and discussion is continuing. This would be a change from the present operation of the project. The program is now under the Urban Services Department directed by Mr. Rogers and NIC Centers are only in branches under its jurisdiction. The Urban Services Departments program has been cut back by the system. It has a decreased budget, less staff and fewer branches to govern. Tremont and Langston Hughes branches are still under Urban Services.

If expanded will it work? Some librarians appear not to be clear about how concept really worked but were optimistic. Some felt it depended on the structure.

The Head of the Branch Department did not see any problems that could not be overcome. As she said, "There may be some obstacles, some individuals to be sold, problems of morale and feelings of insecurity...Some of this is a mirror of national problems though localized.

NIC staff feelings were unanimous in the belief that the experiment had proven its point by doing what was projected or predicted. "If the Phase I Guidelines were modified and implemented in two communities why shouldn't they hold possibilities for systemwide application" mused one individual. Another pointed out that "we've got more than a years experience of making NIC plans work". With local residents involved it is possible, said another.

The majority of NIC personnel felt that they had improved on the job. They knew what to expect and were more efficient in handling complaints. They found that when there was a choice, experience had taught which one to choose. So why not expand and make use of this talent systemwide.

"The library got good response for the small number of people and funds invested during the experiment...The return, on the whole, was considered worthwhile".

Mr. Rogers stated that one goal of the program was to show where there were shortcomings in the system particularly the delivery of services. He thought that the problem facing libraries generally around the country was whether the institutions were willing to respond for expediency or to respond forthrightly, morally and in the right manner.

3. Detroit Public Library

A. System Administration

One cannot visit the Detroit Library without being impressed by the extent to which the NIC project has permeated the entire organization. NIC very fortuitously coincided with the decision of the Detroit Library Administration to extend information referral assistance throughout the public library and to make this service a keystone of rejuvenation of the library system. In Detroit the NIC program has operated under the local acronym of TIP. The acronym is keyed to a local publicity campaign designating the library as the information place. The advertising campaign was contributed by a local advertising firm and has included colorful posters, 300,000 handbills, 1200 bus cards, 15 outdoor billboards, 30 twenty-second TV spots, 7 news feature stories on TV, 100 spot announcements on 12 major radio stations, and 8 radio interviews.

Clearly the primary ingredient in the program at the Detroit Public Library is the commitment of the Director and Deputy Director to the information/referral services as a major part of the library service program. This commitment has resulted not only in the allocation of resources to the service but has been made clearly manifest to the staff as a major new direction in the library service program. This commitment has done much to eleminate normal staff resistance to change and to increase the staff's attention to and interest in a new area of service.

For the purposes of the NIC project three of the branches of the Detroit Public Library have been involved. Initially the Lothrop Branch which serves a predominately black community which is well organized and has been stable for some period of time, the Lincoln Branch which is in a

changing neighborhood which previously has had a majority of eastern european residents but is now experiencing growth in the number of black families. Later a third branch, the Bowen Branch, was added to the project. Bowen was added because the library had recently reorganized this branch combining the branch with a former store front operation and wished to contrast the NIC services in this predominately Spanish speaking neighborhood with those in the Lothrop Branch where the response had not been as enthusiastic as anticipated.

Administratively the project sites report to the Deputy Director through an Area Coordinator. The city has been divided into half and there is branch coordinator for the east and west sides. In addition a TIP clearinghouse staff also reports to the deputy director and provides staff services to the project and to the branches. Initially the TIP clearinghouse carried out four major functions: training staff and the implementation of the TIP service; implementation of the TIP service at the Bowen Branch and at central library; information presentation about the service to interested groups and advertising and publicity. The TIP central staff also worked with the local branch staffs in the implementation of the program in the early stages. This close supervision has been discontinued and the branches now report through the area co-ordinators. Monthly meetings with each branch are held with the TIP central staff to review problems.

At present the TIP clearinghouse staff is involved in the updating and expansion of the resource file, in training of the branch outlets in TIP services and in working to improve the TIP central service at the main library. The TIP clearinghouse staff also continues to provide central-type backup services to the project sites assisting them in resolving difficult questions or providing additional resource information.

At the time of the consultant visit the Detroit NIC service was moving from a process of demonstration to one of operation. The administrative system has been adapted to an operational mode. The TIP clearinghouse staff has moved from a quaisi administrative into a clearly staff supportive role. Additional needed training agendas now appear to be of a skills ability and reinforcement nature and for extension of training throughout the library system.

B. Project Administration

A discussion of the three NIC sites in Detroit follows:

The Lincoln Branch is a small community branch in its own building. The branch has a basic staff of four persons, a reference librarian, an adult services librarian, a children's librarian and a branch librarian. At the time of the visit the reference librarian had the greatest involvement with the NIC project because the Adult Service Librarian had only recently been appointed, although all staff members reported some involvement with the project.

For the most part the staff has accepted the NIC concept as a basic part of the library service and makes no differentiation between NIC services and any other services which the library provides. This attitude was not universal however, and there was some feeling that NIC services have taken time away from other library duties.

Interestingly the staff did not perceive that they had received special training for NIC work but spoke only of attending meetings. Obviously, this perception is related to the fact that much of the training was provided on-site by TIP central staff coming out to work with the branch staff.

At the Lincoln Branch it would seem that the NIC service is in the process of being institutionalized as a basic part of the library's service although that process is not yet complete.

The Lothrop Branch is the most traditional of the three sites in Detroit. It is a Carnegie type building situated on a corner with good visibility. It is in an older neighborhood that appears quite stable and the branch seems to be one of the items of neighborhood adornment.

In general there has been disappointment with the development of NIC service at Lothrop. This is the only branch which utilizes a full time staff person devoted almost exclusively to NIC and it is clear that the service has not been completely accepted and integrated into the branch program of services. The community aide has the primary responsibility for the service.

The NIC services at the Lothrop Branch have not been institutionalized and are still a peripheral part of the branch services and regarded in the demonstration stages. The staff has yet to make a strong committment to this mode of service and to accept them as a basic part of their professional responsibility.

The Bowen Branch was the most impressive example of integration of NIC services encountered during the visits. This branch has an interesting history in that it was a branch which was clearly dying. The service was declining and the community was not making use of it. The Library had opened a store front branch several blocks away which was staffed primarily by persons from the community, several of whom were spanish speaking and had received specialized training in librarianship. The decision was made to transfer all of the Bowen staff elsewhere, to close the store front library and move the staff and program into the Bowen Branch. This move apparently coincided with the institution of the TIP service. In the Bowen Branch the NIC services are clearly a basic part of the library service and the staff makes no differentiation between NIC and any other service. It

should be noted that NIC was not a new service for this staff had been involved in the same kinds of activities in the former store front library.

The atmosphere in the Bowen Branch is very impressive in that there is a great deal of activity and unusually high rapport between the staff and the users. It is impossible to separate the contribution of NIC from the contribution of the staff. The staff works very well together, have a high committment to the users they serve and are very much a part of the community. It is quite likely that the Bowen Branch would be an active and exciting place without the NIC services, on the other hand NIC has been a valuable vehicle for the staff to relate to the community in a very broad way.

The staff has been very active in community walks and has utilized a sound truck to go through the streets announcing library activity and services whereas in the other branches outreach was concentrated on business establishments and agencies.

General conclusions resulting from the interviews in Detroit are as follows:

The staff were universal in agreeing that one does not need professional library training to do NIC work and that it is much more a matter of philosophy and attitude than technical training.

The staff also felt that better indoctrination into communities and to social agencies would have been helpful. The staff felt a need to know more about the agencies listed in their card files as one of them stated, "They need to put some flesh and bones to the descriptive data which they have and to have the means to know what kinds of responses (from agencies) are real and what kinds are not."

C. Agency Impact

Almost universally the staff in Detroit indicated that there had been no problems in terms of relationships to other agencies to whom they were referring people or from whom they sought information. The agencies seemed glad to have the library involved and appreciated the referrals and were very cooperative and cordial. This sounded almost to good to be true and the consultants were at some pains to probe on this point in the interviews but were unable to detect any contrary sentiment or experience. The interviews and data available did not permit an explanation of this positive reception of the library in the information/referral role. One explanation suggested, that many social conditions, atmospheres and attitudes in Detroit had become so negative that most social agencies had given up anticipating positive results and welcomed help from any source. A rival and perhaps more plausible explanation is that the Detroit Public Library has been a noteworthy institution in the community for a long period of time, that many staff members in the agencies know and respect the library and are therefore willing to accept it in a new role and deal with it in a direct way.

There were some noteworthy differences in the ways in which staff seemed to relate to agencies. At one branch the staff talked almost exclusively about personal contact with people in agencies on a first name basis. At other branches the contacts with agencies seemed to be on a much more formal basis with the library staff generally operating from the parameters of the card file on agency services. In the first branch the agency contact was evidently on a professional level, i.e. one professional calling upon another, in the other branches the contact was on more of an

informational level that is the library calling the agency pretty much as a client would call and the agency response generally seemed to be on a more or less formal level.

It should also be noted that the Director of Detroit Public Library is clearly recognized as a strong community leader in Detroit. She is a respected person in the community and this respect naturally attaches itself to the library.

Social agencies being the kind of bureaucracies they are the consultants found it impossible to believe that the library had not encountered the kind of rebuffs, delays and bureaucratic red-tape that generally characterizes most dealings with agencies. Probably the differences is that the librarians are quite committed to serving their users and they persevere beyond the point at which most users would give up. Also the staff is able to address the agency on a level of intellectual articulateness which exceeds that of most clients. Most importantly perhaps, the staff knows how the agency is supposed to perform, they know something about the scope of its services and therefore when they call upon the agency they are able to state the clients needs and demands in a way which makes it almost impossible for the agency to fail to respond.

D. Community Impact

NIC services because they were part of the system TIP service in Detroit received the benefit of a widespread public relations campaign which made a significant impact upon the city. The program utilized all media of communication. Especially noteworthy were bookbags printed with information numbers and a phenomenal quantity of 300,000 handbills which

were distributed throughout the city. The handbills were part of a major advertising campaign contributed by a local advertising agency which included 1000, 18" x 24" posters individualized for each branch; 1200 bus cards; 15 outdoor billboards throughout the city; 30 twenty second TV spots; 7 news feature stories for TV; 100 ten and 30 second radio spot announcements. The campaign was of substantial size and produced dramatic results for the library particularly at the Main Library TIP desk.

Impact is much easier to see at the Bowen Branch than at either Lincoln or Lothrop. The staff at Bowen expressed far more enthusiasm about community outreach activities, and reported door-to-door visitation whereas Lothrop and Lincoln staffs limited their efforts to commercial establishments and other institutions. At Bowen a sound truck has been used to spread news about the library and the staff has also been more active in community activities and events.

It is difficult to isolate the factors which produce the differences noted. Staff at Bowen overall is perhaps younger than at the other branches but all branches have a number of younger staff members. A significant difference may be that many of the Bowen staff members live in the neighborhood which the branch is trying to serve. They grew up there, their families are there, the staff has ties with the neighborhood and many avenues for keeping in touch with the neighborhood. The staff responds to the neighborhood and the neighborhood responds to them. A factor difficult to adequately describe or evaluate but one which we believe highly important.

It is quite likely that Bowen would have been one of the most interesting and active branches in Detroit without NIC but the branch staff continually reiterated to the consultants that NIC and the work of the branch cannot be separated.

In Detroit there has been no formal mechanism for involving the community in planning, design, or operation of the NIC service. In one branch there was genuine resistance to the concept of a neighborhood advisory committee for the service. The staff did not feel that any committee could really speak for the neighborhood and that it was preferable to have a staff that was out in touch with the community on a broad basis than to select no matter how carefully, a group of people who purported to represent the community.

E. Professional Impact

Undoubtedly the major impact of the NIC project has been upon the staff of the Detroit Public Library. The NIC project has permitted the staff to pioneer and develop a new philosophy of service which it might have had to develop at a much slower rate without the project. The clearest test of the impact of the project is that Detroit has been able during the operational phase to extend the NIC concept throughout the 31 branches and into the central library as well. Clearly, success has not been achieved to an equal degree in every locale and there is much more work which needs to be done. Yet, the basic concept has been implanted, the administrative direction has been set forth and the staff is generally responding to this direction.

In a system as large as Detroit it is almost impossible to isolate a single factor and relate this factor to change particularly when the factors include elusive concepts such as attitude and morale. On the other hand the consultants were impressed with the atmosphere which seems to be pervading the system since the initiation of the NIC service. In the past the library has had a large financial problem, low staff morale, a decline in service and a generally bleak prospect. Many of these factors still remain negative, but the consultants also sensed a feeling of optimism, that

to the kind of individualized, unstructured service which the library gives its users.

Detroit Public Library has produced some impressive results, has pioneered some new services and it is to be hoped that within the near future some of these can be documented in greater detail and shared with the profession at large.

4. Houston Public Library

A. System Administration

In the Houston Public Library the NIC project was not included in the administrative line of the library but was rather treated as a separate administrative unit operating from two of the branch libraries Carnegie Branch in a predominately Spanish-speaking neighborhood and Kashmere Gardens in a relatively new branch building in a primarily black neighborhood. Although the library organization chart provides for an Assistant Director and a Chief of Branch Services the project operated under the supervision of the Library Director. Operational control of the project was delegated by the Director to Mr. Guadulupe Mier who served as Coordinator, Neighborhood Information Centers. The Houston project did not rely upon a Central-library based support unit as was the case in some of the other systems, primarily because the Central Library in Houston is very crowded and facilities for such an office were not available. Mr. Mier's office was located in one of the Project branches - Carnegie. Other than fiscal control administration of the project appears to have been solely in the hands of the Coordinator. The location of the coordinator in the Carnegie Branch has resulted in a much closer liasion and supervision of the NIC activities at that Branch than at the Kashmere Gardens Branch. The Coordinator appeared to have a very smooth and effective working relationship with the NIC staff and with the regular branch staff ar Carnegie.

The function of up-dating information files on agencies and maintaining indexes relating to the project has been delegated to each of the branch libraries. There was no effort at coordination of these activities. Files

f data pertaining to services provided by various agencies were thus the responsibility of each of the branches.

Training for the NIC project was conducted by Community Welfare Planning Council. Interviews with staff involved in the training indicated that the training was very useful. Especially noted was the opportunity to handle actual cases received by telephone and visits to a number of social agencies. It was noted that there have be n a number of staff changes since the training period and that no comparable training for new staff has as yet been provided. Also interview respondents indicated that it would have been helpful to have provided some training opportunities for all branch staffs so that the NIC concept would have been better understood and accepted by the regular branch staff.

The degree of integration of the NIC service in Houston is quite varied. At Carnegie the branch staff is very supportive and cooperative and works well with the NIC staff. Although staffing for the project is still differentiated from the regular branch staff a high degree of intergration has occured primarily beacuse the Coordinator's office is located there and because the branch librarian is very interested in the NIC concept. At Kashmere Gardens Branch integration of the project into the regular service pattern or the branch has not occured and as will be noted later there have been some serious problems in this respect.

Overall it would appear that NIC has been primarily a demonstration project at Houston. It has not been a part of the administrative line of the library system and as a result has operated on a pilot basis. As an experiment there has not been a whole-hearted committment to NIC by the administrative officers of the library. There is no question that such a committment exists but it has yet to be made manifest to the staff as a major priority of the library system.

There are, however, clear indications that such a committment is in t process of developing. The Mayor of Houston has expressed strong support of the NIC concept and indicated that support of such services will be a priority in his administration. Given strong political support for the program the library administration is quite prepared and even enthusiastic to make its own concerns in this area quite clear and to move into implementation of NIC services on a much broader scale. The problem of integration of the NIC service into the branch system will still remain.

B. Project Administration

The NIC project has been to a degree isolated from the main administrative stream of the library and this isolation has hampered the results which the project might have achieved. This problem is clearly visible at the Kashmere Gardens Branch where the impression is gained that the project and its staff are rather unwelcome and temporary tenants in the branch. The NIC staff feels that the project and its activities are not well understood or accepted by the branch staff. In part this isolation was attributed to a differential in pay scales between the project and regular staff and in part because the project has attracted into the branch users which are from lower socio-economic classes than the branch staff wishes to cater to.

Neither branch has established a Neighborhood Advisory Council for the project. Persons who might have served on such a Council were identified but when approached the response was so poor that the Councils were not activated.

Initially field work was major component of NIC activity. Project staff made door-to-door visits in the community to explain the project. Posters advertising the service were also placed in stores and other business

establishments in the community. In general the staff reported a much better response from small neighborhood stores than from chain stores.

In terms of user service the project has been primarily a telephone service although it was originally anticipated that walk-in service would be the primary mode.

There is little question that the project has been more successful in the Carnegie Branch than in Kashmere Gardens. There was borne out in interviews with the staff and is also supported by statistics. In February 73% of the total NIC workload was at Carnegie and in March 71%. Examination of earlier project reports indicates that this disparity has persisted throughout the project. The two branch areas are similar in size with the Kashmere Gardens area being slightly larger.

C. Community Impact

The primary impact upon the community apart from the actual service provided through the project has been successful publicity activities undertaken by the library. One of the staff at Carnegie conducts a weekly 15-minute radio program in Spanish over the local Spanish language radio station. The staff reports instantaneous response to this program with the phones beginning to ring as soon as the program is over. The library has also printed many attractive flyers and publicity pieces to advertise the project and these have been produced in both Spanish and English. Overall the staffs feel that the impact of the project is directly proportionate to the amount of time they are able to spend in field work. In the early stages of the project this activity was given priority and accounted for much of the early success of the project. As indicated in Appendix V, 75% of the users in the sample month indiacted that they learned of the service

from radio and TV publicity generated by the library, the largest percentage of these users were reached by the Spanish language broadcast.

A significant measure of community impact can be gained from the fact that at both of the branches a surprisingly large percentage of the users have come from outside the service area of the two branches. In February 81% and in March 78% were from outside the service area. In part this phenomenon may be attributed to the publicity activities which are city-wide but it also indicates a relatively widespread community need for the type of service which NIC provides.

Perhaps the most significant and in the long run most important measure of impact is the fact that the Mayor of Houston has indicated great interest in and support for an expansion of NIC services through out the library system.

All staff members interviewed felt that the community's response to the project had been very good and given more time for publicity and direct community contact could have been made much better. It was also indicated that having staff members in the project who lived in the neighborhood being served was very helpful in spreading the impact of the project although both neighborhoods had high percentages of recently arrived residents which lessened the value of indigenous staff.

Transportation was seen as a significant weakness in the project. In Houston many agencies are not organized on a neighborhood basis and persons must travel to a central office to receive services. Public transportation is not conveniently available, particularly in the Kashmere Gardens and the staff frequently had to arrange transportation for users, often in their own cars. The project was not able to lease or purchase vehicles because of Federal guidelines and persons interviewed felt that this inhibited the

kinds of impact which the project could have made upon the community. If a staff member could not be freed to provide transportation or if it could not be arranged the person was left to his own resources which is exactly the situation he was in before calling NIC.

D. Agency Impact

The staff interviewed at Houston Public Library reported that the project had been well accepted by the various social and service agencies and that there had been no real problems in gaining acceptance of the library in the information and referral role. Several staff did feel that the library's service could have developed more rapidly and smoothly if there had been a mechanism for interpreting the library service to the agencies other than through the staffs in the branch libraries. The Library has had sustained contact with many agencies in Houston through its involvement in a variety of programs notably model cities and this undoubtedly helped pave the way for acceptance of the library in the information referral service. Also early in the project the library involved the Community Welfare Planning Association in its training activities. This involvement also brought about a greater understanding of the library service among a number of agencies.

Perhaps the best measure of impact upon other agencies is the degree to which these agencies have referred persons to NIC. During the first 5 months of the project approximately 15 % of the users were referred from other agencies. This percentage has dropped as the library developed other avenues for reaching people but has continued to approximate 5% of the total users.

No examples of conflict between library and agency personnel could be identified except for the occasional misunderstanding which inevitably arises when communication is not face to face and involves third parties.

E. Professional Impact

The two main activities of the NIC project in Houston with a direct impact upon the professional aspects of the library system is found in two surveys of branch neighborhood areas conducted for the library by the NIC staff. Both of these surveys were directed toward publicizing the branch, revitalizing its services and identifying new service needs. In calling upon NIC staff to conduct the studies the library recognized their community orientation and skill in relating to the community. The results of both studies have been utilized in improving the services of the two branches.

On the other hand, the NIC staff feels that the service has not been well interpreted to or understood by the library staff broadly. The project has been looked upon as an experiment which would likely go the way of other experiments. The NIC staff has been isolated from staff of other branches in the administrative chain of command and in actual fact. In the material describing NIC activities there are no mentions of activities to orient and inform the library staff broadly of the NIC service concept.

Externally the professional impact of the program in Houston has been almost totally limited to dissemination activities relating to the National Project. The Project Coordinator appeared in a presentation at the Texas Library Association in March of this year which was the first external professionally oriented discussion of the project. No library schools in Texas have sought involvement with the project. Of course, it should be noted that there is no library school in Houston and the nearest school is some distance away.

5. Queens Borough Public Library

A. System Administration

The NIC Project in the Queensborough Public Library System was assigned to the Extension Division under Mr. Samuel Lacey, Chief of the Division. The development of the project, training of staff and supervision of program was delegated to the regional librarian, Mrs. Nicholson, in whose area the test branches were located. From the outset it was the intent of the library to put the project into the regular line operation of the system. Therefore each director of NIC was to be the branch librarian under a regional librarian. As previously mentioned both centers were in the area serviced by the same regional librarian. This was a plus for Queen's program because the data obtained from staff during the on-site visits were very favorable in all aspects of administration - from training, working relationships, communications, working conditions, problems and service goals. There were dissatisfactions among staff, not because of a lack of a channel to express gripes and complaints, "but more because of the usual delay in a huge, urban bureaucracy". The data also revealed the ease with which comments were communicated to branch librarians or personally to regional librarian who they believed relayed NIC concerns to administration. This was a very strong endorsement of the leadership of the regional librarian by the NIC staff. Except for chance meetings at Open House Programs, etc. the majority of the NIC staff (information aides) had limited contact with other top administrators of the system.

Queens program was the last of the five systems to get underway. According to the Acting Director, John Solomita, the lateness was due to internal problems revolving around the illness and eventual death of the director. The late Harold Tucker, according to workers in the project, "was a staunch

believer in the information and referral concept". Spokesman for the National NIC Project credit him with being one of two directors of large urban libraries who conceived the idea for the project and worked to secure funds to test it on a nationwide basis.

Despite the slow start the administration of the project has followed closely the national guidelines developed during Phase I. Mr. Lacey indiacted that at the outset his division felt overwhelmed with paperwork imposed by Phase I. "The number of man hours and expense outside of federal funds for two branches for a system the size of Queens was too small. Ten or more branches would have justified expenditures of time, money, and effort". Because Queens was the only place in the State of New York actually doing information and referral many inquiries were received from all over New England. "If Queens could have tested the concept in affluent as well as deprived areas, Mr. Lacey believed it would lead to easier integration into the total system.

One of the most glaring omissions, as indicated by data collected, was the limited promotion and publicity both within and between branches of the system as well as in the Queens Community as a whole. The Acting Director took responsibility for this because of the turn of events and timing of the public announcement of the implementation phase. Other reasons given were a possible conflict with other agencies vying for the same type of information and referral role plus the published comments of a political leader who was against use of paraprofessionals "doing what librarians are supposed to do". All contributed to Mr. Solomita's decision to softpedal publicity and promotion. Certainly sufficient and adequate information about the actual program would help in communicating to staff the actual goals and objectives and allay fears around claims of librarians

roles being that "of social workers". There is no doubt that more effective publicity about NIC concept would contribute to a smoother integration into regular service pattern of the system.

The Acting Director indicated that if funds ended it was the intention of administration to carry on NIC program in some form. Mr. Lacey was delegated the responsibility for determing how, in what form and the cost to maintain and expand concept in the Borough of Queens.

The actual operation of the program in the library system far exceeded that described in written reports or interpreted by representatives at meetings of the National Project. Partly this was due to the fact that aside from the Acting Director or Chief of Extension Division, the second representative was rotated among other workers in the NIC project, Extension or other branches of administration. When asked why those more intimately involved with the project did not represent it, particularly at national meetings, the Acting Director replied that this was part of the training of administrative personnel who would be responsible for systemwide implementation of concept.

B. Project Administration

This aspect was the real strength of the program in Queens. Under the supervision of the regional librarian the branch librarian was also the head of the Neighborhood Information Center. The branch librarian was given complete managerial responsibility for integrating the concept into the services of the agency. The information aides were recruited from the local community and trained by the branch librarians. There has been very little turnover of aide personnel. All seem to enjoy work despite age levels, different interests and the like.

Training Program

A training program for branch staff was established by the Extension Division and conducted by the regional librarian. It was held in branches, the central building, and outside agencies. The series consisted of forums, films, discussion groups, role playing, speeches, field trips to other libraries, social and private agencies as - Community Council of Greater New York, New York State Employment Service, Call for Action, Food Stamp Center, and Social Security. The training program was considered thorough, meaningful and relevant to the full-time staff interviewed.

The information aides were part-time hourly employees who were involved in training after being on the job. Several did not consider this a handicap because of background, previous experience or as one said, "born in neighborhood, know it, know people, had contacts from just living here". Training program was meaningful because it provided the finer points needed. The part-time arrangement allowed Queens to hire more community residents and take advantage of those with special skills and local ties who only wanted part-time employment. Even though some were students, housewives, and senior citizens, there was mutual respect and admiration among them for special knowledge or ability, say, for students to relate to their peer group and their problems. In both sites all aides were enthusiastic, committed and knowledgeable about the NIC concept and their role "as a conduit for information". The aides primary purpose was to collect and dispense information either at the time of request or by referral to an agency, organization, institution or individual. Maintaining close personal contact with all levels of the neighborhood was a constant objective of the aides. They indicated "that it was the only way to get an idea of community needs and moods, or to be able to find out what's happening before it happens". "We often find

answers in somebody's head." Some found that people confided in them outside of NIC rather than come in if they lived in the area and were involved in the life of the community. The contact, once established was maintained by telephone communication and a minimum of personal visits.

The NIC Project of the East Elmhurst Branch was by far the more vibrant of the two centers. There was excellent leadership on the part of the branch librarian and evidence of a real committment to integrate the program into the regular services of the agency.

The information aides appeared to be committed to the concept. All indicated how conscious and excited they have become about the information role and services of libraries. This has caused a fallout of others. The working relationships within both centers are evidence of this fact.

C. Community Impact

Personal or business contacts with residents were considered to be the most effective means of informing the local communities of the program. Posters, flyers, form letters, talks with neighborhood organizations, visits to schools, spot announcements on radio and street festivals were other ways of publicizing and promoting information services.

The Open House method was used rather successfully by the system, to introduce NIC in both communities. The East Elmhurst Open House was co-sponsored by its Community Advisory Board. As indicated in reports, the Advisory Board was cool to the program at the outset because of not being informed, consulted or included in formulation of project. There has been some change in attitude and even some use of services by advisory members.

The South Jamaica Unit did not have an advisory group but was proud of the number of community residents brought in by the total branch staff for Open House.

The staffs of both agencies thought that the community response was good. "The community has come to know that information is here without a lot of footwork." There are sizeable senior citizens populations living around both agencies who use and help promote by word of mouth. Other patrons were referred by friends, neighbors, relatives or strangers. The East Elmhurst staff feels that the community has a very positive attitude on the whole. Use of meeting rooms by groups are encouraged.

The South Jamaica Branch is located in a low income minority area as opposed to the mixed lower, middle income East Elmhurst Branch Community. Some of the staff was at a loss as to why community response was not greater. "The follow-up was good and few questions were posed that were not answered to the satisfaction of patrons. Some seem to think we are an employment agency. Would think people helped would spread the word."

The comment of one worker sums up staffs idea of the community's response when she stated, "It started poorly but community use has been gradually increasing".

Communication

Formal channels were in existence. Reports were made to the regional librarian through the branch librarian. Weekly statistical reports and daily logs were maintained by information aides. The writing of narrative reports, on human interests were rotated alphabetically among aides. Periodic staff meetings for total staff as well as spearate meetings for NIC staff were held in one agency while the other reportedly called them only when it was related to problems.

In addition, individual conferences were possible at anytime up to the regional librarian level.

There were expressed feelings that narrative reports should not be limited to "just human interests accounts because the problems NIC gets are not human interests".

Staff considered that their immediate supervisors were approachable, would listen and go-to-bat with administration on issues vital to success of project.

D. Agency Support

This support, on the whole, has been described as cooperative and helpful. Agencies around the East Elmhurst Center were reported to be very responsive. The attitude of most was, "that they were in the business of dispensing information and services also but the library may reach people, people that they want encountered". Information aides and librarians visited agencies together to show that this was a library related activity. The branch librarian thought that this was important for the correlation to be made. Agencies publicize and refer patrons to NIC as well as use its services often.

Some governmental agencies in the South Jamaica branch area were characterized as being grudgingly cooperative. Aides explained that most agencies have more people than they can handle adequately. Even when visits were made no one wanted to talk with them or "take the responsibility for saying no".

How did the aides alleviate this problem? Simply by bothering them - making referrals to them and letting the telephone ring 30-40 times until they answered.

Initially aides visited local agencies with a questionnaire for them to fill out. The completed form was kept, filed and used to make calls, visits or to refer to about resources of agencies. Found that files compiled by

each NIC were more beneficial than the Irma File, which listed only services of agencies and did not tell enough about them. The Irma File was difficult to update and revise in present format.

E. Professional Support

As in all of the library systems involved in the Neighborhood Information Centers Project the present concept of operation in a library is virgin territory. As the Chief of Extension remarked, "it is new ground for the Queens Borough Public Library. The acceptance among professional colleagues within the system is difficult to gauge, since only a few staff members have been involved, coupled with limited publicity about the program. The Acting Director believes that the concept has to be sold to other staff and is developing a program to make implementation as smooth as possible. One NIC director thought that most librarians would welcome it when they realize that it is not a counseling service or an employment agency, but only information and referral in a branch in addition to regular branch services.

Chapter III

Overview of Local Projects and Individual Project Recommendations

"You can't give what you haven't got" - NIC aide

In this chapter an effort will be made to identify some of the significant variables which seemed to be factors affecting all or most of the NIC projects. These observations are based almost entirely on the consultant's interviews in the five project sites. At the end of the chapter a number of individual recommendations pertaining to each of the project sites will be made.

The variables identified below are in no particular order of significance except that the consultants feel that the first two are among the most critical.

A. Administrative leadership.

The degree of committment of the administrative leaders of the library and the degree to which this committment is made known throughout the system appears to be critical to the acceptance, integration and success of the NIC work. There are some interesting variations within the five libraries which seem to highlight this point. In two of the systems there have been acting directors for most of the project. In one case the absence has meant a dramatic increase in the workload of the remaining administrative staff and a resultant inability to deal consistently and effectively with the many problems related to NIC. In this system the staff has carried out the work as best it could but without being able to relate NIC work to overall organizational goals and objectives and without adequate opportunities for administrative review and reinforcement of in-branch activities. In the

other system the absence of a director has meant a delay in initiating NIC work, genuine difficulty in resolving administrative problems involved in beginning a new service in a highly bureaucraticized system and additionally the expenditure of a great deal more effort by NIC staff than would have been required had the original administrative direction been on the scene. These comments are not directed as criticisms to either system for, indeed, in both libraries personnel to whom the responsibility for directing NIC fell have devoted themselves diligently. The observations to point out the singular importance of strong, sustained administrative leadership in the implementation of new venturesome services, particularly in bureaucratic organizations such as large urban public libraries.

In a third city the administrative direction was clear from the beginning and NIC was seen not as an experiment but as a new avenue of service which would be the vehicle for revitalizing and redirecting the library system. The full administrative force of the system including publicity, funds, supervision, and promotion, transfer and dismissal of staff were brought to bear on the implementation of NIC. It is obvious that this system achieved within Phase III a much higher degree of integration of NIC into normal library operations and that the staff came to see NIC not only as a basic but as a priority part of their work.

In the other two systems the administrative view of NIC was that of an experimental service funded by external funds which might or might not persist beyond the end of the project. In neither of these systems were implications for the entire system drawn from the project and in both the project had very little impact outside the branches in which it was placed.

It is clear then, that administrative support is a key variable in the initiation of NIC services and where that support is strong, consistently

available and articulated to the staff as a new apriority then NIC tends to permeate the organization to a greater degree, gain greater acceptance and make a greater impact upon the staff of the library, upon the community and upon the agencies with which the library makes contact.

B. Integration of NIC Services

A key factor in implementation of NIC services appears to be the degree to which these services are integrated into the full range of services which the library offers. Conversely, where the NIC service is seen as peripheral to normal library services implementation is slower and more difficult. In three of the systems the consultants were able to view at least three branches in which to a greater or lessor degree the NIC services had been integrated into the branch program. In all three cases the branch librarian appeared to be a key figure in bringing about such integration. Where the branch librarian accepted the NIC concept, worked closely with the program, became involved in the training and in the delivery of services, other staff members took the same approach and became quite acceptive of NIC and worked closely and cooperatively with the NIC staff. In other branches, the staff did not accept the project as something affecting them or their work and in several cases their attitude could be expressed as one of patiently enduring an aberration in the normal flow of library work which hopefully would soon pass away.

It should be noted that clear cut examples of integration and non-integration were found within the same system and in at least two of the systems none of the branches showed integration of the NIC service to any significant degree.

One should perhaps not expect a high degree of integration in a research and demonstration project, on the other hand the presence of integration was consistently associated with success in the project and its absence was associated with either failure or dissatisfaction in the project to such a degree that the consultants are convinced that it is a variable of major importance which should be carefully built into designs for extending the NIC concept in these and other library systems.

C. Staffing

1. Quality of Staff

There was a high degree of variation in the staff utilized within the various libraries. In only one case was there a high utilization of professionally trained librarians at the service provision or desk level of NIC work. In all systems the overall supervision of the work was under the direction of professionally trained personnel. There is disagreement among the systems on the staff required. The system utilizing professional personnel at the desk level is convinced that this is a vital element in the provision of service, and the other four systems which do not utilize professional personnel were equally insistent that professional training is not necessary. In analyzing the user responses to the questionnaire administered by the libraries and shown in Table I, the chi-square test of significance indicated that there was no significant difference between the positive user responses. There were too few negative responses to permit this analysis.

All of the libraries agreed that regardless of training of staff a major factor appeared to be the neighborhood orientation of the staff. Where the staff was indigenous to the neighborhood, active in

Table I

Tabulation of
User Response Questions
by Library

	Queens		Houston		Detroit		Cleveland		Total	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
1. Did you get information desired	44	1	8	2	21	1	51	0	124	4
2. Was the problem solved	20	1	8	2	18	4	42	3	88	10
3. If referred was service given with minimum trouble	11	5	3	1	15	4	46	3	75	13
4. Would you use library information service again	20	0	10	0	21	0	47	0	98	0
5. Is it a needed service	19	0	10	0	21	0	47	0	97	0
6. Should service continue as a part of community library service	20	0	10	0	21	0	47	0	98	0
7. Would you encourage other people to use it.	20	0	10	0	21	0	47	0	98	0
TOTALS	154	7	59	5	138	9	327	6	678	27

the neighborhood and well known in the neighborhood the service tended to be more successful and to attract a greater response from the community. Where such staff was lacking development of NIC services tended to be slower, and acceptance by the community tended to be less enthusiastic. Based on the data available and the interview it is not possible to provide an answer to the question of whether or not professional personnel should or should not be used for NIC work, except to note that in the one case in which they were employed the consultants felt that it was the community identification and orientation of the staff which was significant rather than their professional training, and to note further that staff which commute into a low-income neighborhood from more affluent and comfortable communities will probably not find the community orientation and identification which NIC requires an easy task.

2. Training of Staff

There was more commonality in the content of training given to staff for NIC work than perhaps in any other aspect. Variability in staff training occured with respect to involvement of external groups and consultants, with the number of staff involved (in some cases training was limited to NIC staff and in others branch staff was included) and in the duration of the training. No discernable differences among staff with respect to training could be found. All of the staff interviewed expressed appreciation for their training and felt that it had been appropriate to their task, well conducted and had stood them in good stead in the actual practice of the service.

Several staff indicated a feeling that they needed to know more about agencies and their behavior than the training had provided and several felt that some refresher training after the program had been underway for some time would have been very beneficial.

In all cases staff expressed a great curiousity in knowing what has happened in NIC in other cities and often queried the consultants on this point. It was obvious that the mechanisms for providing this kind of data to staff were either inadequate or not working. The primary avenues available were reports submitted by the libraries which could have been shared with staff and reports made by each project at the national meetings of the consortium.

In general the training provided staff seemed to have been well handled, to have been adequate in content and useful to them as a preparation for NIC work. Several instances were noted in which staff who joined the project later on, well after the initial training period, had not received any training. Evidently the training mechanisms built into the project did not provide for staff turnover which in some of the projects was relatively high. As a result many staff members had to learn on the job. These persons tended to feel a need for more formalized preparation.

3. Motivation

Throughout the consultants were struck by the high motivation which generally prevailed in the five projects. Both motivation and morale were high and the staffs were very enthusiastic about their work and anxious to talk about it. There was, of course, a high degree of "Hawthorne effect" present in the project. The

staff was part of an experimental project which they knew was being examined not only by the outside consultants but by many in their own library organization and for this reason a higher degree of cohesiveness and morale would have been expected. But even making reasonable allowances for this fact the morale and staff espirit de corps was unusually high. The consultants were at great pains to make clear that their work had nothing to do with renewal of the project. In several cases all employees of the project were already assured of continued employment regardless of the future of the project so it was felt that their responses were genuine. In large part the motivation is attributable to the fact that the staffs were highly neighborhood oriented and saw the NIC program as a method for providing a needed and important service to a community of people about whom they had great concern. In other cases the motivation centered around the future of the library services in the community. In several of the branches the traditional indicators of library use had been showing negative trends for some time and the staff saw NIC as a possible means of enlivening the branch and demonstrating that people in the community would indeed use the library if it offered services which were meaningful in terms of their needs.

It is not possible to identify a specific cause for the effect noted but it is significant that success of the program in a given branch was positively associated with staff motivation and morale. The higher the motivation the more successful the program tended to be and the lower the motivation and morale the less successful. This cannot be demonstrated as a positive statistical correlation but it

was quite obvious to the consultants as they viewed the totality of the programs.

D. Services

1. Relationship to Traditional Services

As a general rule the greater the degree of program integration the more relationship the staffs tended to see between NIC and the more traditional services of the library. In cases of relatively low integration the NIC services were existing in parallel with the traditional services and not always in happy juxtaposition. In interviews several staff members spoke of having to take time away from regular library work to do NIC work. It is perhaps expecting too much to anticipate that a new service would become institutionalized in the relatively short space of the NIC project's duration. But the range was surprising. In one branch the staff completely resisted the consultants suggestion that a differentiation could be made between regular branch work and NIC work and in another the staff readily agreed that regular library work was entirely separate from NIC work and felt that the separation should be maintained. Far more predominant was the view that NIC was either a logical extension of work that the library was already doing or a logical return to and re-emphasis of a philosophy of service which the library had always expounded. Conflict between those who held a traditional view of the library and NIC staffs was at a minimum but occurances were reported. Primarily library staff who did not welcome NIC did so on the basis that it had a "social work" coloration and was taking the library beyond the provision of information into new areas in which it had neither expertise nor a well established claim.

2. NIC Services

Those who supported NIC were not always able to articulate their philosophy more coherently than were those who objected to it. Depending upon the library and its philosophy NIC might mean one or more things. There were several elements of the service which appeared in all of the projects, however, and these will be discussed before dealing with anomalies.

In all cases there was a special telephone number established for NIC. This number rang at the NIC desk, which in all cases but one was separate from the library desk. The NIC desk was generally manned by one of the NIC staff. In all cases a form was used to record the call. There was a general recommended form developed for the project but in each case the form was subject to local adaptation and in many cases the adaptation was substantial. The form recorded the questioners name and generally the address and telephone number. The question raised was recorded and there was space to record the action taken by the library. In several libraries greater amounts of information about the patron were obtained, including age, sex, and in some cases economic status. The question was generally classified by subject. After obtaining the needed information the NIC assistant then used a variety of tools to seek out the answer. Many questions fell into an "information only" category indicating that the caller was seeking only some specific information or direction. In these cases the card was closed when the caller had been supplied with the information. In cases which required referral the library usually had access to a file of data

on various agencies which the NIC project had compiled. In one case this file was developed centrally and maintained centrally but in others it was developed at the beginning of the project and then maintained on an individual basis by each branch. In one of the libraries the file was a city-wide file developed for use by many agencies. In common the files offered a subject approach and an agency approach. In all cases the branch staffs did substantial annotating of these files and also utilized a variety of locally produced directories of social service agencies to supplement the data in the files.

It is fair to note that as the project developed there was a tendency to collect less and less data about each caller. Partly this is because the libraries found some resistance from users to giving out this kind of information and partly because much of it was not found to be useful by the libraries. Since in most cases the greatest number of requests came in over the telephone it was cumbersome to question the user to obtain a great deal of personal data about him and also created an impression which the libraries wished to avoid. For in person users the data was frequently collectable by observation. This lack of data prevented any description of users.

Once the NIC staff member had clearly understood the question and had identified from sources the appropriate agency to handle the problem he either gave the patron the information or made a call to the agency to take up the users problem. The decision as to whether the library or the individual made the contact was up to the individual. When the library made the phone call, the individual

was called back to relay the agencies response and to arrange for any further action which the individual needed to take, for example visiting the agency at a specified time to see a specific person about his problem. Four of the libraries utilized three-way phone equipment which permitted the NIC staff member, the caller and the agency to be on the line at the same time with the NIC staff member acting as intermediary and relaying the agency's comments and questions to the user. When necessary i.e. when there was a referral, the library kept the case open and several days later made a follow-up call to the user to ensure that the problem had been satisfactorily resolved. The follow-up procedure is perhaps one of the unique characteristics of the NIC service. If the user did not receive the service or if the problem was not resolved the library could again intervene on the users behalf to attempt to gain resolution of the problem. Generally cases were kept open until the problem had been resolved. There were also instances in which the library came to realize that the problem was not solvable or in which the user decided that the matter was not worth pursuing further.

Apparently there were no major differences in the types of problems which people phoned in and those for which they came in in person. It might be expected that the more personal matters would come over the telephone to insure some degree of anonymity but this did not prove to be the case.

There were variations on the above outline in a number of cases. Some libraries did a great deal more follow-up work than others and

in one very little follow-up was done. Follow-up tended to show that in most cases the problem had been solved if indeed the problem was solvable, eg. if the caller was eligible for the service he sought. For example, not everyone who called for voter information and was referred to the proper place for registration was in fact registered because not all who called were eligible to be registered.

The more support which the branches received from a central source in the maintenance of their agency files the more these files tended to be used. Where the files were centrally up-dated and the information prepared and shared with the branches the files continued to be in active use. Where this was not the case the original file quickly became dated and the branches either relied upon locally produced files, or more commonly upon locally produced directories of agencies which they annotated from their own experience. All commented upon the great amounts of time required to up-date these files and rapidity with which agencies changed their personnel, hours, policies, and services. An important variable here seemed to be the degree to which social service agencies in a city were decentralized to a neighborhood level. Where the major social agencies had branches and neighborhood outlets, the branch libraries seemed to feel that they could more easily and effectively maintain the contacts and the information, but where the most used agencies were centralized and served the entire city it was difficult for the individual branches to maintain adequate liasion and contact. In future plans for NIC service it seems important to give careful study to the pattern of social agency organization in deciding upon a centralized or decentralized system for maintaining the library's information files. Regardless of the pattern all of the

branches expressed a desire and a need for greater contact with the other branch libraries doing the same type of work and for more frequent opportunities to meet together to exchange ideas and information.

E. OutReach and Publicity

All of the libraries conducted a variety of outreach and publicity efforts in connection with their NIC programs.

Outreach took one of two forms. The least frequent which occured in only two places was a door-to-door visitation to explain the service and introduce the staff to the neighborhood. The other was a program of visits to community business establishments, churches, agencies, and offices to leave literature and hand-outs and to put up posters. Population density apparently had some relationship to which method was chosen but not universally so. The personal style of the staff also seemed to be important. Some of the staffs readily took to the idea of knocking on people's doors and introducing themselves and others did not. There were also some neighborhoods in which this was an effective and wise method and others in which it was not. There was no clear cut pattern to the method of outreach and variations occured within the same city. The staff generally indicated that there had been a decline in outreach activities as the project progressed with a great deal of emphasis upon it in the beginning and less and less as it developed. This was in part due to the fact that as the service developed more staff time was required at the branch. In several of the cities the onset of the winter made visits out into the community less possible. All of the libraries reported a high correlation between the amount of outreach work conducted and the amount of NIC work received at the branch and felt that outreach was critically important to sustain the service.

All of the libraries undertook publicity campaigns to announce the service and to bring it to the attention of users. Except for Detroit in which the service was system wide there was a problem in preparing publicity for the broadcast and general newspaper publicity media due to the fact that the service was limited to two or three branches. This was generally handled by using feature stories and articles in the general print and broadcast media and then focusing specific publicity on the neighborhood in which the branches were located. There is no need to be encyclopedic in cataloging all of the methods and media used. Commonly the projects had posters and handbills printed describing the service quite generally and giving the phone number. Where appropriate these were in Spanish. These were available in large quantities and were distributed through the neighborhoods by a wide variety of means. As handouts, in church bulletins, in grocery bags, at meetings, etc. All of the libraries were able to see a measureable impact from the publicity and like the outreach activity feel that it is necessary to sustain the service. In most cases the response to the publicity was rather rapid indicating that people felt a need for such a service, and as has already been noted Houston has felt an immediate and dramatic response to its program in Spanish, broadcast weekly over the Spanish language radio station.

Like outreach activities NIC publicity was greatest in the early stages of the program and has tended to decline as the program has progressed. All of the libraries however feel that sustained publicity is critical to the growth and development of the service. This is borne out by the data in Appendix V which shows that the most frequent sources for NIC clients were word of mouth (learned of NIC from friend, relative, etc.) and printed publicity.

F. Agency Relationships

Overall the libraries report a high degree of acceptance and cooperation by the various social and service agencies with which they have dealt. One branch reported that like the clients it had a difficult time reaching agencies and that they were not always cooperative. Apparently this is a localized situation relating to a number of agencies in this neighborhood not being staffed to provide the level of services which are demanded by the community. Problems with agencies were so infrequently reported and mentioned that the consultants took some pains to ask additional questions in this area to ensure that the staffs were not merely painting a rosy picture. Apparently such was not the case because the data on agency responses contained in Appendix VI tends to bear out the responses from the interviews. Seventeen of 21 agencies reported being aware of the library service. Nineteen of these agencies felt the library service was valuable or highly valuable, and eighteen reported that referrals from the library helped in the provision their services. Thirteen felt that the service should be expanded and six felt that it should be kept at the current level, none felt that it should be curtailed or eliminated.

There were explanations for the high degree of cooperation which the libraries received which seemed to fit all of the situations. In part it seems to relate to the library's prior image in the community, particularly with respect to other agencies, in part it relates to the degree to which the library was able to interpret and explain the services it was seeking to provide to the agencies and in part it seems to relate to the general high regard for the public library as an institution which persists in many communities. Since social agencies have a reputation for generally being

uncooperative, unresponsive and bureaucratic the fact that the libraries in these five cities were able to receive a cooperative response is noteworthy whether it is a testament to the agencies, to the libraries or both.

It should be noted that the libraries generally worked hard to develop smooth working relationships with agencies and where this was done the libraries reported better reception than in those cases where the library did not develop such relationships and limited its contacts to telephone calls in behalf of users. Apparently as in outreach and publicity, the response from the agencies was directly proportionate to the effort which the library put into interpreting its service and in developing useful working relationships. Several of the branches reported a need to have more contact with agencies particuarly to visit agencies and to meet the people they had talked with over the telephone and to see the agencies in operation so that the library staff might have a better understanding of the agencies working situation. Several staff members also indicated that more could have been done to interpret and explain the library's NIC service to the agencies and that this would have facilitated the relationships and saved a good bit of time spent by the branches in defining and explaining the service.

G. Evaluation

Regretably little evaluation has been done at the project level of the individual NIC projects. Funds were provided in the project budgets for local evaluations but these have been conducted in only one city. As a result a rare opportunity for careful documentation and study in detail of the development of a new service in large public libraries has been lost. Some evaluation can still be done but it will in many cases have to depend upon the examination of records and reports, rather than upon the first hand experience of those who were most closely involved in the development

of the project. In several of the cities personnel changes have already changed the initial staffs, and as has been reported here, as the project has developed many aspects which were emphasized in initial stages are no longer receiving the same emphasis. Forms for recording data have been changed and report formats and content have also changed, so that consistent study of the individual projects will be nearly impossble.

It is not possible to clearly explain the avoidance of evaluation which has occurred. The libraries clearly have had successful experiments which are worthy of study and yet local evaluation has not been given priority. In some cases there was a feeling the the implementation phase was nor truly representative and that evaluation should await a more mature development of the service. Several of the projects were late in getting into Phase III and it is possible that evaluation will be undertaken at a later time. It is clear that evaluation was not designed as an integral part of the projects and it has not proceeded with the projects so that useful description of an objective nature will be available at the end of the project for refinement and readjustment prior to the next steps which the libraries may wish to take. Thus far this evaluation, the national evaluation by Foley et.a., and one undertaken by Dr. Franklin of the Cleveland project are the only evaluative efforts of the NIC program.

II. Individual Project Recommendations

1. Atlanta

a. Filling of the position of Director of the NIC program to provide needed leadership for planning, coordinating and supervision of neighborhood sites. This essential sensitive project should be filled as soon as possible.

b. Improve channels of communication within the system and between NIC center and their staffs.

c. Increase the amount of scheduled outreach by staff.

d. Define and clarify the role of the Central NIC Office. The functions of the office should be broadened. At present the staff of the office is not given authority or responsibility for conducting the role thrust upon it by the other NIC centers.

e. More comprehensive publicity of the program including more systemwide publicity within the Atlanta Public Library system.

2. Cleveland Public Library

a. Initiate activities to involve a great many more staff in NIC work to avoid isolation of the service.

b. Administration needs to make clear its support of NIC services as an important priority of the library and not "something we have always done in a new guise".

c. The decision to place NIC in the administrative line under the branch direction should facilitate the integration of NIC services but it also poses the risk that the NIC services will be absorbed too thoroughly and become just one more service which branches provide well or poorly depending upon their individual characteristics.

d. The Central NIC office needs to take greater responsibility for up-dating the agency files in the various branches and for establishing and maintaining agency contacts to interpret the service.

3. Detroit Public Library

a. Detroit needs to develop policies and understandings between TIP Central and the branches on the various roles each will play. TIP central is heavily overloaded and some of the branches at least are under utilized.

b. The Central NIC office needs to continue and to develop new service roles relative to the branches. Training of staff will continue to be an important role for some time to come as will up-dating the TIP files.

c. NIC training needs to become an integral part of the in-service training of all staff members rather than a specialized training form. In other words NIC training should be integrated with other training for work in the library just as the NIC service is being integrated into the other library services.

4. Houston Public Library

a. The NIC service needs to be brought more clearly into the administrative line and placed under the Coordinator of Branches to facilitate integration into the system.

b. The Central NIC office should assume responsibility for up-dating branch data files and for developing and maintaining contacts with agencies throughout the city.

c. Training needs to be undertaken to increase the degree of integration of NIC services with other branch services and to break down resistance to and misunderstanding of the NIC service.

d. The administrative needs to clearly and consistently make clear to all elements of the library system the priority it attaches to the NIC service as an important new element in the library's program.

5. Queen's Borough Public Library

a. The project requires greater support from the publicity department of the library in promoting the concept within the system and outside in the community.

b. A regular program of meetings for information aides from the various centers needs to be scheduled to exchange problems, knowledge, information, and techniques.

c. If the library intends to extend the service throughout the system a careful evaluation of the IRMA file needs to be undertaken. The file is growing out of date and there is not a clear cut policy for up-dating by the city. If the IRMA file will not support the project the library may need to establish a central office to up-date this information for all branches.

d. Additional training aimed at increasing the integration of NIC services needs to be undertaken. At present in at least one of the centers little relationships between NIC and regular branch service is seen. This problem will be more acute if the service is extended to other branches.

Chapter IV

National Project Administration

"This is one federal project in which most of the money went to community service and very little was spent on building a superstructure"
- Library Administrator

This chapter will deal with the problems involved in operating a national consortium of five independent geographically dispersed libraries in conducting a research and demonstration project. As conceptualized the project placed the Cleveland Public Library in a central role and the responsibilities of this role involved administrative, co-ordinative, research, fiscal, professional relations and public relations. Given that these were the responsibilities stated for the national staff of the project they serve as convenient reference points for discussing the national project administration.

Administrative -

Obviously the Cleveland Public Library exercised little or no direct administrative control over the local projects. The project libraries were autonomous and conformed to project guidelines and policies because they had agreed to do so rather than because of any control exercised over them. Throughout the project the only control available to the Cleveland Public Library was to withhold funds to ensure compliance with various project requirements. That this sanction was not invoked is a testament to the leadership which Cleveland gave to the project.

While there was not administrative control, Cleveland carried a large administrative responsibility in the area of record-keeping and reporting.

This responsibility was necessarily passed along to the individual projects for participation in the reporting. Throughout the consultants heard comments from projects that the amount of paperwork involved in the projects had been excessive. In part this feeling arises from the fact that the project was in phases. A report was needed at the conslusion of each phase and a summary report for each fiscal year was required. The work products which were developed during Phase II for use in each library in developing the local plan also required written reporting. Phase III involved the libraries in submitting quarterly reports of their progress and activities to the Cleveland Public Library which also had responsibility for a composite quarterly report to the U. S. Office of Education. Quarterly reports are commonly accepted by those accustomed to dealing with federally funded research efforts but it is not surprising that these seemed onerous to local libraries not accustomed to such requirements. The project was a generalized exploratory design rather than a tightly structured research project and for this reason reporting needed to be fuller and of wider scope than would have been the case had there been a research design which might have isolated a few salient variables and focused reporting upon these.

Co-Ordinative -

The coordinative responsibilities of the national staff were primarily devoted to keeping projects on schedule and adjusting differences when this could not be done. The national staff also assumed a great deal of responsibility for resource identification, sharing and dissemination between the projects. Activities and ideas which developed in one project were quickly fed to others for whatever utility they might have. The

national staff also arranged a series of meetings to expose local project staff to other information referral services. A primary coordination point was the quarterly meeting of project representatives held in the early stages of the project. These meetings provided a full opportunity for sharing experiences and insights as well as for adjusting administrative problems. It might have been anticipated that these meetings would have produced relatively strong feelings of group solidarity but the consultants did not observe this. At the end of the project the group remained representatives of five libraries meeting with a common purpose rather than a new group which had shared certain experiences and purposes. There were no strong feelings of group identity or loyalty. The consultants were able to observe the group during a stressful period and did not observe group maintenance or support tasks to any significant degree. The project might have had smoother relationships and perhaps achieved a greater degree of group cohesiveness and adherence to purpose if some specific attention had been paid to group processes earlier and throughout the project. This is not to suggest that the group did not work together effectively on common problems but to indicate a belief that effectiveness could have been heightened and facilitated.

Research -

The major research activities of the national project staff were carried out in Phase II. These activities consisted of a study of neighborhood information centers and services in a very broad context. The study was primarily an experience survey which attempted to gather the experience of other groups and agencies in conducting related or similar work in cities both in this country and elsewhere; and a literature search which examined

relevant professional literature in librarianship and in other fields. The generalized research design used for this phase seems appropriate given the relatively unknown and indefinite state of NIC services in public libraries. Apparently no report was issued summarizing the findings in Phase II. This lack is unfortunate because such a document might have provided useful information and findings which could have been disseminated to the field generally. Project libraries apparently received the results of the Phase II activities from the reports of the activities of the Research Director.

Other research activities have continued into Phase III. The National Project Officer (now National Project Director) has continued to monitor the literature of librarianship and other fields and bring to the attention of local project directors materials which might be useful to them.

Fiscal -

The fiscal arrangements were handled entirely through the Cleveland Public Library. Apparently these were very well handled and no instance of conflict relative to the handling of funds was detected. The libraries felt that they had received funds due them with timeliness. Some concern about the amount of paperwork involved was encountered and several libraries indicated some difficulty in adapting local fiscal policies, procedures, and regulations to the peculiarities of research funds. The bulk of the fiscal reporting problems fell upon the Cleveland Public Library and these were considerable. Even though the National Project Director and National Project Officer both had considerable experience in grant administration the problems of dealing with five different local fiscal systems and at

the same time meeting the rigorous and inflexible demands of federal grant funding agencies resulted in considerable effort.

In theory as fiscal agent the Cleveland Public Library had responsibility to withhold funds from local projects for noncompliance with project requirements. This did not occur, and obviously had it done so would have caused a crisis of some proportions. The relationships between the parties to the consortium were apparently not spelled out in any binding agreement other than the fact that all were signatory to the original proposal. Had an irresolvable conflict on fiscal or administrative matters developed there were no mechanisms for resolution.

Professional and Public Relations -

As has already been noted each of the projects conducted a local public relations campaign of some magnitude. In addition the Cleveland Public Library assumed responsibility for dissemination to the professional and public audiences information about the project. A lengthy bibliography of publications and professional visits has emerged from the project. It has been listed in the annual report of the project (4) and will not be repeated here. It is apparent that the national staff made a determined effort to bring the project to the attention of any interested parties and had some success in so doing. In addition to publications both the national and local project offices have been visited by a number of library schools, library organizations and interested visitors to inquire first hand about the project.

There are several additional areas in which reporting would be of great value. The local projects need to prepare critical descriptions

of their projects identifying both strengths and weaknesses and particularly problems so that these may be made available to other libraries.

The national project staff has also been engaged in a pioneer activity in administrative relationships. The NIC project is one of the first to be funded under a new provision of HEA Title II-B which permits the Office of Education to make grants available to local library agencies. In addition this project is apparently one of the first to involve a consortium of five public libraries in conducting a common service. These relationships need to be explored and the advantages and disadvantages inherent in them need to be made explicit not only for the guidance of other libraries but for the U. S. Office of Education as well. If as appears to be the case consortia of various kinds will become a primary mode for service provision a great deal more needs to be known about these administrative devices and the NIC project can serve as a useful beginning point for such examination.

Chapter V

Summary and Conclusions

"NIC does a lot for the spirit"
- Branch Librarian

It is difficult to summarize a project of the duration and diversity of the NIC project in a brief report. Rather, an effort will be made here to identify what appear to the authors to be some of the salient successes and weaknesses of the project in the hope that these may be of use to the five libraries and to others who are interested in this concept of service.

Weaknesses

The primary weakness of the project lay in the fact that it achieved far more impressive results as a demonstration of a new program of service than as a research effort.

The project did not have a research design which could have provided guidance for research activities throughout. As a result research was generalized and very sporadic. Examining evaluation as one aspect of research one would have to conclude that evaluation has also been limited to description. Description even when conducted by careful, skilled and concerned persons cannot replace objective measurements of results achieved, compared to outcomes intended. The consultants for this evaluation, for example, were involved rather late in the project and have functioned under severe time and data restraints.

Earlier planning for research and evaluation activities would have resulted in far more useful and significant research.

An examination of the tables in the appendices to this report will quickly confirm that the libraries were not able to consistently and fully report basic descriptive statistics about the work being conducted even though the statistics sought were based upon items which the libraries, under the guidelines of the project, were supposed to be collecting.

Projects deviated substantially from the original design of the proposal. Additional branches were added, central activities which were not part of the original design were established and a number of other changes of a less obvious nature occurred. Each of these deviations altered the project and severly limited or inhibited the research which could be undertaken.

The relationships between the five libraries were not initially made clear and the role of the project administrator was not always understood or accepted. From this project it is clear that calling a relationship a consortium does not automatically change the ways in which participants behave. A great deal more thought needs to be devoted to the relationships between cooperating libraries and the implications of these relationships for the eventual outcomes of the activities co-operatively planned.

Phase II of the project apparently had limited relationships to the activities undertaken by the libraries in Phase I and even less impact upon the programs of service which they initiated in Phase III. It is felt that this could have been avoided had Phase II resulted in "the criteria, and broad guidelines necessary for the design for the implementation of a Neighborhood Information Center in each city"; as anticipated in the original project design.

Community Participation -

The original project design called for the development of advisory councils of community residents. These councils for the most part did not develop and were not used. In one city advisory councils were developed and are functioning and in another they were in the process of being formed late in the project. In one of the cities there was genuine opposition to the formation of such councils and two others were evidently unethusiastic about the creation of these bodies. It is not proposed to argue here the pros and cons of community advisory bodies but rather to point out that this was an additional deviation from the basic project design, even though the plans for such groups were one of the work-products of Phase I.

Outreach -

Throughout the project there was considerable variation in both the nature and amount of outreach activities conducted by the various libraries. There was no standardized method of conducting outreach activities and as a result comparisons between the libraries have little meaning. A library which sends staff members out door-to-door to introduce a new service directly to individual residents is very likely to attract a different response than one in which outreach consists of visits to community organizations, businesses and meetings of community groups. Variations were also great in the amount of outreach activity conducted. These variations occurred not only between the projects, but within projects as well. Some branches in a particular city were quite active in outreach and devoted a large amount of staff time to it while other branches devoted very little staff time. There were also significant variations in staff attitudes toward outreach activity. Some staff welcomed it as a chance to get out and learn a great deal more about the community. Others treated

it as part of the job to be done. It is likely that these differences would also provide a difference in the response encountered.

Reporting -

There are major variations in the amount and kind of reporting done by the libraries. Some reports were timely, full and highly descriptive of the work being done. Others were delayed, sketchy and limited to recitations of events without analysis or comment. The reports also did not follow a consistent form. This problem tended to increase as the project progressed and makes meaningful comparisons between the libraries in the latter stages of the project almost impossible.

Similar erosion occurred with respect to the gathering and reporting of statistics. Initially a basic recommended statistics form was developed for use at the local level. Over time the libraries added to and deleted material from this form and adapted it to their own local purposes. As a result the data collected became for the most part non-comparable on a national basis.

Strengths -

The strengths and successes of the NIC project are numerous and well worth highlighting. The consultants have come to feel about information and referral services like a backwoodsman who when asked if he believed in baptism replied, "Believe in it! Hell, man I've seen it done!" Indeed, we have had the priviledge of seeing it done and that has been a rare opportunity.

Service -

Paramount among the accomplishments of NIC is the fact that several hundreds of citizens have received very valuable services from libraries which they would likely not have received from libraries or anywhere else without NIC. The comments from users reported on the user questionnaire and those reported by the libraries indicate that many of the users of NIC turned to the service as a last resort and were pleased, delighted and amazed to find that a problem which to them had been huge and insurmountable could indeed be solved. From a service point of view the libraries have achieved the goals they set out to reach to establish information and referral services of high quality, with prompt response times and with a high degree of success.

Innovation -

Librarianship is not a field in which innovation comes about very rapidly. It is slow to change and even slower to adopt new patterns of service which require new types of behavior. One need only read the history of a few innovations in the field to recognize this fact. In a few short months these five libraries have been able to plan, initiate and develop to a rather high order a new service which not only requires new behaviors on the part of librarians but challenges the basic professional assumptions of many. That there have been problems in so doing as noted above cannot detract from the fact that it has been done. The services are in existence, they are functioning with relative smoothness and in most communities appear to be firmly established and accepted. In fact it is apparent that in several of the communities, the library would experience genuine difficulty should it attempt to move away from the NIC service.

It has also been clearly demonstrated that five quite dissimilar libraries can work together to establish a common form of service.

Relationships with Agencies

The project has clearly established that the public library can establish professional peer relationships with other public serving agencies and be accepted not only as a partner but as a welcome participant in the field of social service. The libraries in the project have forged new relationships with a wide variety of agencies and have achieved a high degree of respect for their efforts. The high degree of endorsement indicated by the agencies in the data contained in Appendix VI shows that whatever problems may have been involved in establishing and gaining acceptance of the service from other agencies have been overcome very successfully.

Relationships with agencies could have easily been a major barrier to the referral aspect of the service. Without agency acceptance the libraries could not have made successful or useful referrals. The libraries were sensitive to this possibility and worked hard to gain acceptance from the agencies. Social agencies are frequently jealous of their "turf" and not especially welcoming of new actors in the process. The libraries were able to overcome such resistance and to overcome it with high endorsement from the agencies.

Morale -

Throughout the consultants were surprised at the high morale, and dedication on the part of NIC personnel. For the most part these were not

professional librarians but all of the staffs exhibited a genuine faith in, and dedication to the work that they were doing. This is especially noteworthy in that the interviews were largely conducted toward the scheduled end of the project and many staff quite naturally had concerns about their own employment future. The spirit observed was that of people involved in work which they believe to be important and to which they are committed. Anyone who has worked in large organizations knows that this feeling is difficult to build and even more difficult to maintain. It speaks well for the leadership in the project that people of such ability were recruited and motivated and it speaks equally well of the staffs themselves that this dedication has persisted to the very end of the project.

Publicity -

The NIC project presented the libraries with a new story to tell and for the most part they told it well and frequently. The NIC service was the recipient of a great deal of publicity at the local level. All of it was well done, much of it exceptionally well done. Especially impressive were the quantities of publicity materials prepared, the diversity of it-among the examples noted were bus cards, billboards, sound trucks, handbills, book bags, balloons, and posters. Much of the publicity was multilingual where that was appropriate. All of it was specific, recipients were given a specific phone number of a specific branch. NIC was used to test some new ideas in publicity and many of them worked well. The phenomenal success of the spanish language broadcast in Houston can be matched by less dramatic but equally effective and persistent efforts in almost every city.

New Client Relationships -

The NIC project has introduced these five libraries to a new range of clients with whom they have relationships quite different from the traditional library/client relationship. In many cases users have shared deeply personal information with library staff members. These confidences have been respected and the users have tended to trust the library again. Many of the current users are repeat users.

Perhaps most importantly the NIC service has attracted users who were not previously users of the library. Throughout staff reported that the NIC users were different users from those who came in or called in to use the library services. They tended to use NIC and not other library services. To the extent that this is true the libraries are reaching a new audience with the NIC service. An audience which previsouly had no reason to support or think well of the library because they made no use of its services. In a day when usage indicators for traditional services are largely negative the opportunity to reach an entirely new audience is a rare one.

Information Referral

Residents of low income neighborhoods have been conditioned to certain types of public response. In many instances, in the past, they have not been upset if they didn't get them. The rationale being that they didn't expect too much anyway.

Information and referral provides library personnel with a continuing opportunity for front line, face-to-face interaction with people as they encounter everyday problems of urban living in cities across this nation.

Libraries can use this concept to really get closer to the people it proposes to serve and from it receives its financial support.

Of this concept, followup is crucial in assessing the value and effectiveness of any I&R program. It documents and provides a rating of the system and the procedure set up to dispense information in the following manner:

1. Determine if patron utilized source referred to and if not, why?
2. Aids in identifying and establishing resources of the area.
3. Gives a built-in program of accountability which allows library and public officials or residents to know the quality of services given community.
4. Develops working relationships between library and agency personnel.
5. Indicates if a correlation exists between existing community resources and expressed needs.
6. Provides motivation and a built-in reward for staff when they are thanked or praised by satisfied patrons simply for bringing people and information together in solving of a personal or basic problem.

The latter may account for the difference in the attitude and commitment of Information Aides to the I&R concept, to program implementation when contrasted to those held by a segment of librarians. Some quarters counter that a difference in the philosophy of Librarians to the I&R concept should be surveyed and considered. Lack of knowledge may account for such philosophical positions.

People openly appreciated the fact the library was concerned enough to follow up requests. Some liked to have a go-between in some matters working on their behalf.

Conclusion

In summary the NIC project has accomplished its basic purposes which were "to provide information or referral assistance information to people who may be in lower income brackets, poverty level, welfare assisted, who may have little or limited education, who may have difficulty in reading or in understanding information in printed forms and need interpretation to aid and enrich the lives of these people and the lives of their children, to demonstrate that a Public Library will play a meaningful role in dissemination of information by establishing an Information Center planned specifically for a neighborhood, and by meeting the varied information needs of the people served in the neighborhood selected".

These objectives were lofty and to have met them is a major accomplishment. In the process the consortium has pioneered a new service which shows great promise for increased effectiveness for public libraries. The libraries remain committed to the concept of neighborhood information and referral services and at this time are making plans for additional extension of this service pattern in the individual systems. An effort which can only be applauded.

Notes

1. Turick, Dorothy Ann, Annual Report, Project No. 2-0860, Grant No. OEG-0-72-5168, A Proposal to Research and Design Criteria for the Implementation...Cleveland Public Library, 1973.

2. ibid. pp. 3-4.

3. ibid. pp. 31-41.

4. ibid. pp. 23-30.

APPENDIX I

DATA COLLECTION FORM FOR NEIGHBORHOOD INFORMATION CENTER PROJECT EVALUATION

January 1 - 31, 1974

Library System _____ Center _____

Week of _____ Name of Sta f _____

I. REQUESTS

	Number		
A. Type:	Br. #1	Br. #2	Total
1. Walk-in	_____	_____	_____
2. Telephone			
a. Regular	_____	_____	_____
b. 3-way	_____	_____	_____
3. Other	_____	_____	_____
B. Source			
1. From within area	_____	_____	_____
2. From outside area	_____	_____	_____
3. Did not ask	_____	_____	_____
C. Status:			
1. Number completed	_____	_____	_____
2. Number referred	_____	_____	_____
3. Number pending	_____	_____	_____
4. Number failures	_____	_____	_____

D. Follow-up:

1. Reported on all requests
2. Lack of client response
3. Lack of agency response
4. List other reasons on reverse side

II. USER CHARACTERISTICS

A. Patrons:			
1. Number using NIC			
a. New users	_____	_____	_____
b. Repeat users	_____	_____	_____

II. USER CHARACTERISTICS (Cont.)

B. Sex:

	Br.#1	Br.#2	Total
1. Female.....	____	____	____
2. Male.....	____	____	____

C. Age:

1. Teenagers	____	____	____
2. 19 - 34	____	____	____
3. 35 - 44	____	____	____
4. Over 55	____	____	____
5. Did not ask.....	____	____	____
6. No response.....	____	____	____

D. Type of Service Given:

1. Walk-in.....	____	____	____
2. Telephone.....	____	____	____
3. Other ..... (Please list).....	____	____	____

_____

E. Learned of NIC From:

1. Friend, relative, etc.....	____	____	____
2. NIC outreach (Personal).....	____	____	____
3. NIC outreach (Printed material).....	____	____	____
4. Referred by agency.....	____	____	____
5. Other	____	____	____
6. No response.....	____	____	____

III. TYPE & FREQUENCY OF STAFF COMMUNITY OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

	Number		
A. Type & Frequency of Contacts:	Br.#1	Br.#2	Total
1. Individual.....			
2. Agency.....			
3. Organization.....			
4. Institution.....			
5. Other (please list).....			
_____			
B. Method:			
1. Outside activities:			
a. Personal contact.....			
b. Speeches, etc.....			
c. Telephone contact.....			
d. Attending community mtgs., programs.....			
e. Community walks, tours, etc.....			
f. Radio - programs, spot announcements.....			
g. Television " " "			
h. Newspaper publicity.....			
i. Printed posters, flyers, etc.....			
j. Displays, exhibits, etc.....			
k. Other (Please list).....			
2. In-Branch activities:			
a. Regular programs and activities.....			
b. Special programs			
(1) Branch sponsored.....			
(2) Branch co-sponsored.....			
(Please list co-sponsors)			
_____			
_____			

LIST OF SUBJECT CATEGORIES

		1st Week	2nd Week	3rd Week	4th Week	Total
1.	Analysis of Local Govt. Functions.....	____	____	____	____	____
2.	Analysis of Community Inform. Res.....	____	____	____	____	____
3.	Cultural.....	____	____	____	____	____
4.	City Services.....	____	____	____	____	____
5.	Child Care.....	____	____	____	____	____
6.	Clothing.....	____	____	____	____	____
7.	Community Research.....	____	____	____	____	____
8.	Consumer Protection, Safety & Infor...	____	____	____	____	____
9.	Day Care	____	____	____	____	____
10.	Directory Assistance.....	____	____	____	____	____
11.	Dogs, Strays.....	____	____	____	____	____
12.	Drug Abuse.....	____	____	____	____	____
13.	Education.....	____	____	____	____	____
14.	Employment/Job Training.....	____	____	____	____	____
15.	Financial Aid.....	____	____	____	____	____
16.	Food/Food Stamps.....	____	____	____	____	____
17.	General Reference.....	____	____	____	____	____
18.	Handicapped-Services, Rehab., etc.....	____	____	____	____	____
19.	Health/Health Care.....	____	____	____	____	____
20.	Homemaker/Housekeeper Services.....	____	____	____	____	____
21.	Housing.....	____	____	____	____	____
22.	Income Maintenance.....	____	____	____	____	____
23.	Income Tax.....	____	____	____	____	____
24.	Individual & Family Life.....	____	____	____	____	____
25.	Information Only.....	____	____	____	____	____
26.	Legal.....	____	____	____	____	____
27.	Library Services.....	____	____	____	____	____
28.	Licensing & Regulations.....	____	____	____	____	____
29.	Medical/Dental.....	____	____	____	____	____
30.	Mental Health.....	____	____	____	____	____
31.	Notary Public.....	____	____	____	____	____
32.	Planning Data.....	____	____	____	____	____
33.	Public Protection.....	____	____	____	____	____
34.	Recreation.....	____	____	____	____	____
35.	Scouting.....	____	____	____	____	____
36.	Small Crisis Intervention.....	____	____	____	____	____
37.	Social Adjustment.....	____	____	____	____	____
38.	Social Services.....	____	____	____	____	____
39.	Social Security.....	____	____	____	____	____
40.	Speakers Bureaus.....	____	____	____	____	____
41.	State Government.....	____	____	____	____	____
42.	Technical Assistance.....	____	____	____	____	____
43.	Tutorial Services.....	____	____	____	____	____
44.	Tree Service.....	____	____	____	____	____
45.	Transportation.....	____	____	____	____	____
46.	Veneral Disease.....	____	____	____	____	____
47.	Vital Statistics.....	____	____	____	____	____
48.	Vocational Training/Counseling.....	____	____	____	____	____
49.	Voter Registration.....	____	____	____	____	____
50.	Welfare.....	____	____	____	____	____
51.	Other.....	____	____	____	____	____

(Please List)

APPENDIX II

USER SATISFACTION

1. Did you get information desired? Yes ____ No ____

2. Was the problem solved? Yes ____ No ____

3. If you were referred to another agency, was the service given with a minimum of trouble? Yes ____ No ____

4. Would you use the library information service again? Yes ____ No ____

5. Is it a needed service? Yes ____ No ____

6. Should this service continue as a regular part of the community service of the library? Yes ____ No ____

7. Would you encourage other people to use it? Yes ____ No ____

*Comments _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

* (Do not ask for comments, but if spontaneous, please record).

APPENDIX III

AGENCY QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear

In recent months the Public Library has been engaged in a new program of services including the provision of information to and referral of persons needing a variety of social services.

At the request of the library we have undertaken a study of these services. An important part of this study is to obtain the reaction of agencies receiving requests for information and referral from the library. We hope that you will complete the enclosed brief questionnaire and return it in the enclosed stamped envelope. Please note that your agency is not identified other than by type and your response is completely anonymous.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

Agency Questionnaire

City: _____

1. Type of Agency:

   Welfare_____ Health _____ Legal _____

   Religious _____ Other (indicate) _____

2. Are you aware of information/referral requests from the public library? Yes _____ No _____

3. Do you feel that this is a valuable service for the library to provide? (Please circle the appropriate choice)

   A. Highly valuable B. Valuable C. Somewhat valuable

   D. Not valuable

4. Considering all agencies from whom you receive referrals those coming from the library are: (Please circle appripriate response)

   A. Most effective D. Effective C. Somewhat effective

   D. Not very effective

5. Do referrals and information requests from the library help _____ or hinder _____ the provision of your agency's service?

6. From your agency's point of view should library information/referral services be: (Please circle appropriate letter)

   A. Expanded B. Kept current level C. Curtailed D. Enliminated

7. What suggestions can you give the library to improve its information/referral services? (Please use reverse)

APPENDIX IV

NEIGHBORHOOD INFORMATION CENTER
EVALUATION STUDY

1. What staff members were involved in the project?

2. What functions did these staff members carry out? What are their duties?

3. What training has the staff received?

   a. What parts of the training were most useful in carrying out NIC services? Why was it valuable?

   b. What parts were not especially useful? Why not?

   c. How did you compensate for the lack of training in these areas?

4. What do you think are the most important qualifications for people doing the kind of work you do?

5. How well do the people in the project work together?

6. Has there been much staff turnover in the project?

   a. Why do you think this is the case?

7. Have you made any suggestions for improving the project?

   a. How were these suggestions received?

8. How are communications carried out? How do the people in the project communicate?

9. Do you make oral or written reports? To whom?

10. Of all the various kinds of meetings about the project which were the most useful? Why do you think so?

11. Describe the kinds of relationships and contacts you have with the central project staff.

12. How did you approach the community?

    a. Describe the response from the community.

13. What are the services of NIC? Describe them?

14. How have the residents of the neighborhood been involved in the planning, operation and evaluation of the service?

    a. Do you have a Community Advisory Committee

15. How has the community responded to the project?

16. How responsive have agencies been to the services of the project?

17. What steps could have been taken to gain a greater response?

18. What are your feelings about the project now as compared to your feelings at the outset? Why have they changed?

19. How do you see the future for this concept within the library system?

APPENDIX V

ANALYSIS OF DATA COLLECTION

Category	Cleveland No.	Cleveland %	Queens No.	Queens %	Detroit No.	Detroit %	Atlanta No.	Atlanta %	Houston No.	Houston %	Total
I. Requests											
A. Type											
Walk-in	18	7.0	115	47.0	69	28.0	25	10.0	17	7.0	244
Telephone(regular)	49	8.0	127	21.0	125	21.0	16	3.0	265	45.0	582
B. Source											
From w/in area	43	18.0	121	51.0	n/r	n/r	26	11.0	45	19.0	235
From out area	30	8.0	83	23.0	n/r	n/r	15	4.0	224	64.0	352
Did not ask	5	9.0	39	67.0	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	14	24.0	58
C. Status											
# Completed	68	13.0	86	16.0	195	37.0	34	6.0	147	28.0	530
# Referred	113	21.0	145	27.0	141	26.0	6	1.0	124	23.0	529
# Pending	65	38.0	84	49.0	n/r	n/r	1	-	20	12.0	170
# Failures	3	43.0	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	4	57.0	7
D. Follow-Up											
Rep. all Req.	15	12.0	42	34.0	61	50.0	5	4.0	n/r	n/r	123
II. User Contact											
A. Patrons											
# Using NIC (New)	91	17.0	187	35.0	n/r	n/r	22	4.0	228	43.0	528
# Using NIC (Repeat)	18	14.0	56	45.0	n/r	n/r	19	15.0	31	25.0	124
B. Sex											
Female	59	11.0	151	29.0	92	18.0	22	4.0	190	37.0	514
Male	22	8.0	92	36.0	43	17.0	14	5.0	86	33.0	257
C. Age											
Teenage	n/r	n/r	26	53.0	10	20.0	1	2.0	12	24.0	49
19-34	n/r	n/r	54	29.0	44	23.0	8	4.0	82	44.0	188
35-44	n/r	n/r	57	38.0	9	6.0	17	11.0	65	44.0	148
Over 45	n/r	n/r	32	41.0	18	23.0	9	11.0	19	24.0	78
Did not ask	n/r	n/r	68	26.0	112	43.0	4	1.0	76	29.0	260
N/R	n/r	n/r	6	67.0	n/r	n/r	2	22.0	1	11.0	9

Category	Cleveland No.	Cleveland %	Queens No.	Queens %	Detroit No.	Detroit %	Atlanta No.	Atlanta %	Houston No.	Houston %	Total
D. Type Service Given											
Walk-in	n/r	n/r	71	40.0	65	36.0	25	14.0	17	9.0	178
Telephone	n/r	n/r	171	32.0	123	23.0	16	3.0	211	40.0	521
E. Learned of NIC											
Friend, relative, etc.	25	25.0	48	49.0	n/r	n/r	13	13.0	12	12.0	98
NIC personnel	6	14.0	25	58.0	n/r	n/r	9	20.0	3	7.0	43
NIC printed	38	23.0	84	51.0	n/r	n/r	7	4.0	35	21.0	164
Ref. by agency	5	19.0	10	38.0	n/r	n/r	1	3.0	10	38.0	26
Other	10	4.0	45	17.0	n/r	n/r	10	4.0	206	76.0	271
N/R	1	2.0	31	79.0	n/r	n/r	1	2.0	6	15.0	39
III. Staff Commun. Outreach											
A. Type & Freq. Contacts											
Individual	36	15.0	n/r	n/r	190	78.0	17	7.0	1	-	244
Agency	60	69.0	5	5.0	5	5.0	4	4.0	13	21.0	87
Organization	44	81.0	8	14.0	n/r	n/r	2	3.0	n/r	n/r	54
Institution	1	5.5	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	17	94.5	n/r	n/r	18
Other	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	1	6.0	15	94.0	16
B. Method - outside act.											
Personal contact	25	29.0	6	7.0	54	64.0	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	85
Speeches, etc.	1	20.0	n/r	n/r	3	60.0	1	20.0	n/r	n/r	5
Telephone	49	84.0	2	3.0	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	8	13.0	59
Com. meeting	29	80.0	2	5.0	5	14.0	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	36
Com. walks	60	88.0	n/r	n/r	7	10.0	n/r	n/r	1	2.0	68
Radio	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	12	100.0	12
T-V	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	2	33.3	n/r	n/r	4	66.6	6
Newspaper	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	1	100.0	1
Posters, etc.	1,339	99.0	10	-	2	n/r	n/r	n/r	2	-	1,353
Displays, etc.	n/r	n/r	7	100.0	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	7
Other	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	10	100.0	10

Category	Cleveland No.	Cleveland %	Queens No.	Queens %	Detroit No.	Detroit %	Atlanta No.	Atlanta %	Houston No.	Houston %	Total
Method - in branch											
Reg. prog.	n/r	n/r	9	11.0	71	89.0	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	80
Spec. prog.											
branch sponsor	n/r	n/r	9	64.0	3	21	n/r	n/r	2	15.0	14
branch co-sponsor	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	4	100.0	npr	npr	npr	n/r	4

	Cleveland	Queens	Detroit	Atlanta[1]	Houston[2]	Total
1. Analysis of Local Govt. Functions		5	1			6
2. Analysis of Community Inform. Res	21	3				34
3. Cultural		4	5		1	10
4. City Services	14	27	15		4	60
5. Child Care	2	4	1		6	13
6. Clothing	2		1		3	6
7. Community Research		3				3
8. Consumer Protection, Safety & Infor	1	14	6		5	26
9. Day Care		5	5			11
10. Directory Assistance			19		9	28
11. Dogs, Strays			2			2
12. Drug Abuse					1	1
13. Education	2	26	12		34	74
14. Employment/Job Training	26	30	4		20	80
15. Financial Aid	12	19	6		1	38
16. Food/Food Stamps	15	4	3		12	34
17. General Reference	3		1		93	97
18. Handicapped-Services, Rehab., etc	4	1	2			7
19. Health/Health Care	14	1	14			29
20. Homemaker/Housekeeper Services			3			3
21. Housing	2	3	8			13
22. Income Maintenance	2					2
23. Income Tax	1	2	15			18
24. Individual & Family Life	2		2			4
25. Information Only	44	20	1			65
26. Legal	5	13	16			34
27. Library Services	3	1	1			5
28. Licensing & Regulations			3			3
29. Medical/Dental	5	12	7			24
30. Mental Health	5	1	1			7
31. Notary Public						
32. Planning Data						
33. Public Protection		2				2
34. Recreation		3	16			19
35. Scouting						
36. Small Crisis Intervention	3	2				5
37. Social Adjustment						
38. Social Services						
39. Social Security	7	15	5			27
40. Speakers Bureaus						
41. State Government			3			3
42. Technical Assistance		4				4
43. Tutorial Services		3	3			6
44. Tree Service		3				3
45. Transportation	2	7	1			10
46. Veneral Disease			3			3
47. Vital Statistics			4			4
48. Vocational Training/Counseling			7			7
49. Voter Registration						
50. Welfare	11	9	3			23
1. Other		2				2
(Please List) Totals	208	253	195		189	845

1. Not received in Useable Form
2. Includes 1 Branch Only

APPENDIX VI

ANALYSIS OF AGENCY RESPONSES

City: All except Houston, responses = 21
N= 10 each city
Atlanta-7/10; Queens-1/10
Cleveland-6/10; Detroit-7/10

1. Type of Agency:

Welfare 1 Health 2 Legal 2

Religious 3 Other (indicate) Social Service - 5

Settlement - 1; Recreation - 1; United Way - 1; Human Relations - 1; Community - 3; Education - 1.

2. Are you aware of information/referral requests from the public library? Yes 17 No 3 N/R 1

3. Do you feel that this is a valuable service for the library to provide? (Please circle the appropriate choice)

A. Highly valuable 13 B. Valuable 6 C. Somewhat valuable 1

D. Not Valuable 0 No Response 1

4. Considering all agencies from whom you receive referrals those coming from the library are: (Please circle appropriate response)

A. Most effective 6 B. Effective 8 C. Somewhat effective 3

D. Not very effective 0 No Response 4

5. Do referrals and information requests from the library help 18 or hinder 2 the provision of your agency's service? No response = 1

6. From your agency's view point should library information/referral services be: (Please circle appropriate letter)

A. Expanded	B. Kept current level	C. Curtailed	D. Eliminated	N/R
13	6	0	0	2

7. What suggestions can you give the library to improve its information/ referral services? (Please use reverse)

Up-date information; clarify role of information and referral; more in-service workshops for staff; more A-V equipment to support community groups and activities; extended hours; better follow-up on referral; make available more publications on social service; have a listing of books in the Library of Congress; inform other agencies of information and referral service.

APPENDIX VII

LIST OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED

National Project Staff:

Mr. Walter Curley (formerly National Project Director)
Ms. Dorothy Turick (now National Project Director)

Atlanta Public Library

Ms. Mary Louise Rheay, Acting Director
Ms. Ella Gaines Yates, Administrative Coordinator
Ms. Crane. Central NIC Librarian
Ms. Brenda Hunter, Government Information Librarian
Mr. Bobby Henderson, Branch Librarian
Ms. Kelly Flowers Reese, NIC Librarian
Ms. Carolyn Lowe, Branch Librarian
Ms. Jelks, NIC Librarian

Cleveland Public Library

Dr. Fern Long, Acting Director
Ms. Clara Luciola, Acting Deputy Director
Ms. Dorothy Turick, National Director of NIC
Mr. Jim Rogers, Head Urban Services Department and Director, Cleveland NIC
Ms. Beth Rader, Operations Officer, Cleveland NIC
Mr. Tyrone Cofield, Director NIC - Langston Hughes Branch
Ms. Charlotte Lennon, Information Aide - Langston Hughes Branch
Ms. Judy Young, Director NIC - Tremont Branch
Ms. Gail Knight, Information Aide - Tremont Branch

Detroit Public Library

Ms. Clara Jones, Director
Mr. Robert B. Croneberger, Deputy Director
Ms. Michele A. Kapecky, NIC Central
Ms. Carolyn Luck
Mr. James Evenhuis, Branch Librarian
Ms. Angie Espino
Ms. Bea Esquivel
Ms. Marva Greenwood
Ms. Corliss Davis
Ms. Florence Heath
Ms. Marsha Allen
Ms. Bennett
Ms. Hatcher
Ms. Nancy Benham
Ms. Cynthia Moreland

LIST OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED (Cont)

Houston Public Library

Mr. David Hemington, Director
Ms. Ann Hornak, Assistant Director
Mr. Len Radoff, Coordinator Branches
Mr. Guadulupe Mier, NIC Coordinator
Ms. Laura Lampley
Ms. Esther Trevino
Ms. Eddie Grant
Ms. Willie Triggs
Ms. Agelia Perez
Ms. Norma Herrera

Queen's Borough Public Library

Mr. John Solomita, Acting Director
Mr. Samuel Lacey, Chief Extension Division
Ms. Jewel Nicholson, Regional Librarian
Ms. Caruso, Asst. Chief Extension Division
Ms. Joan Cole, Branch Librarian
Ms. Pargear, Information Assistant
Ms. DeLagorde, Information Assistant
Ms. Cole, Information Assistant
Mr. Lew Shu, Branch Librarian
Ms. Lyder, Information Assistant
Mr. Baskerville, Information Assistant